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VOLUME VI. MDCCCC.

The Bibelot

A Reprint of Poetry and Prose for Book Lovers, chosen in part from scarce editions and sources not generally known . . . .

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VOLUME VI

Portland, Maine
THOMAS B. MOSHER
Mdcccc

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WITHDRAWN

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The Bibelot

ANGELO AMBROGINI, *surnamed Poliziano,—from a Latinized version of his birthplace, Montepulciano,—was born in 1454 and died September 24th, 1494. If anything were wanting to perpetuate the fame of the author of* The Orfeo *it has been adequately supplied by John Addington Symonds. Indeed one may truly say that the poetry of the Italian Renaissance was but yesterday revealed to us in the fascinating pages of his monumental work.*[1] *True, many exquisite bits of translation lie hidden away in out of print volumes, among which must be included this version of the Orphean fable.*[2]

In re-issuing The Orfeo *one can find nothing to add concerning this prototype of the lyric drama which the English historian has not far better said already. The greatest Latin student of the Golden Age of Medicean supremacy, Poliziano was also*

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1 *Symonds'* Renaissance in Italy *must be consulted at large, more especially Vol. II, pp. 345-357, 452-465; Vol. IV, pp. 398-403, 406-424.*

2 *A new collected edition of Symonds' Greek and Italian studies is now coming out in London. 8vo. 3 vols. (Longmans.)*

the greatest popular poet of his day. We have already seen something of his poetic charm.[3] *We have now to consider his success mingled with failure, as must needs be with all originators, in a new and untrodden field of Art.*

As a touch of the real and familiar we shall do well to remember the relationship existing between the greatest classical scholar of his age and the greatest also of the Medici; that they were not only friends but brother poets; that when the Magnificent came to die two men were alone with him, Savonarola, who is said to have denied him absolution, and—boon-companion and fellow-reveller, born poet of light loves and lesser lusts—Poliziano!

---

3 *See* Songs of Dead Florentines, *in* The Bibelot *Vol. II, pp. 81-112.*

FOR FEBRUARY:

LEONARDO DA VINCI

By

WALTER PATER.

THE 'ORFEO' OF POLIZIANO

Translated by

JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS.

"LORENZO DE' MEDICI could boast of having restored the mother tongue to a place of honour among the learned. But he was far from being the complete artist that the age required. 'That exquisite flower of sentiment we call good taste, that harmony of intellect we call judgment, lies not within the grasp of power or riches.' A man was needed who should combine creative genius with refined tact in the use of language. . . . He must be gifted with that reverent sense of beauty which was the sole surviving greatness of his century, animating the imagination of its artists, and justifying the proud boast of its students. This man was Angelo Poliziano. He, and only he, was destined, by combining the finish of the classics with the freshness of a language still in use, to inaugurate the golden age of form. Faustus, the genius of the middle ages, had wedded Helen, the vision of the ancient world. Their son, Euphorion, the inheritor of all their gifts, we hail in Poliziano."

SYMONDS, *Renaissance in Italy*, Vol. IV, pp. 399–401.

ORFEO.

THE 'Orfeo' of Messer Angelo Poliziano ranks amongst the most important poems of the fifteenth century. It was composed at Mantua in the short space of two days, on the occasion of Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga's visit to his native town in 1472. But, though so hastily put together, the 'Orfeo' marks an epoch in the evolution of Italian poetry. It is the earliest example of a secular drama, containing within the compass of its brief scenes the germ of the opera, the tragedy, and the pastoral play. In form it does not greatly differ from the 'Sacre Rappresentazioni' of the fifteenth century, as those miracle plays were handled by popular poets of the earlier Renaissance. But while the traditional octave stanza is used for the main movement of the piece, Poliziano has introduced episodes of *terza rima*, madrigals, a carnival song, a *ballata*, and, above all, choral passages which have in them the future melodrama of the musical Italian stage. The lyrical treatment of the fable, its capacity for brilliant and varied scenic effects, its combination of singing with action, and the whole artistic keeping

of the piece, which never passes into genuine tragedy, but stays within the limits of romantic pathos, distinguish the 'Orfeo' as a typical production of Italian genius. Thus, though little better than an improvisation, it combines the many forms of verse developed by the Tuscans at the close of the Middle Ages, and fixes the limits beyond which their dramatic poets, with a few exceptions, were not destined to advance. Nor was the choice of the fable without significance. Quitting the Bible stories and the Legends of Saints, which supplied the mediæval playwright with material, Poliziano selects a classic story: and this story might pass for an allegory of Italy, whose intellectual development the scholar-poet ruled. Orpheus is the power of poetry and art, softening stubborn nature, civilising men, and prevailing over Hades for a season. He is the right hero of humanism, the genius of the Renaissance, the tutelary god of Italy, who thought she could resist the laws of fate by verse and elegant accomplishments. To press this kind of allegory is unwise; for at a certain moment it breaks in our hands. And yet in Eurydice the

fancy might discover Freedom, the true spouse of poetry and art; Orfeo's last resolve too vividly depicts the vice of the Renaissance; and the Mænads are those barbarous armies destined to lay waste the plains of Italy, inebriate with wine and blood, obeying a new lord of life on whom the poet's harp exerts no charm. But a truce to this spinning of pedantic cobwebs. Let Mercury appear, and let the play begin.

THE FABLE OF ORPHEUS.

MERCURY *announces the show.*

Ho, silence! Listen! There was once a hind,
Son of Apollo, Aristaeus hight,
Who loved with so untamed and fierce a mind
Eurydice, the wife of Orpheus wight,
That chasing her one day with will unkind
He wrought her cruel death in love's despite;
For, as she fled toward the mere hard by,
A serpent stung her, and she had to die.
Now Orpheus, singing, brought her back from hell,
But could not keep the law the fates ordain:
Poor wretch, he backward turned and broke the spell;
So that once more from him his love was ta'en.

Therefore he would no more with women dwell,
And in the end by women he was slain.

Enter A SHEPHERD, *who says* —

Nay, listen, friends! Fair auspices are given,
Since Mercury to earth hath come from heaven.

SCENE I.

MOPSUS, *an old shepherd.*

Say, hast thou seen a calf of mine, all white
Save for a spot of black upon her front,
Two feet, one flank, and one knee ruddy-bright?

ARISTAEUS, *a young shepherd.*

Friend Mopsus, to the margin of this fount
No herds have come to drink since break of day;
Yet may'st thou hear them low on yonder mount.
Go, Thrysis, search the upland lawn, I pray!
Thou Mopsus shalt with me the while abide;
For I would have thee listen to my lay. [*Exit* THYRSIS.
'Twas yester morn where trees yon cavern hide,
I saw a nymph more fair than Dian, who
Had a young lusty lover at her side:
But when that more than woman met my view,
The heart within my bosom leapt outright,
And straight the madness of wild Love I knew.
Since then, dear Mopsus, I have no delight;
But weep and weep: of food and drink I tire,
And without slumber pass the weary night.

MOPSUS.

Friend Aristaeus, if this amorous fire
Thou dost not seek to quench as best may be,
Thy peace of soul will vanish in desire.
Thou know'st that love is no new thing to me:
I've proved how love grown old brings bitter pain:
Cure it at once, or hope no remedy;
For if thou find thee in Love's cruel chain,
Thy bees, thy blossoms will be out of mind,
Thy fields, thy vines, thy flocks, thy cotes, thy grain.

ARISTAEUS.

Mopsus, thou speakest to the deaf and blind:
Waste not on me these wingèd words, I pray,
Lest they be scattered to the inconstant wind.
I love, and cannot wish to say love nay;
Nor seek to cure so charming a disease:
They praise Love best who most against him say.
Yet if thou fain wouldst give my heart some ease,
Forth from thy wallet take thy pipe, and we
Will sing awhile beneath the leafy trees;
For well my nymph is pleased with melody.

THE SONG.

Listen, ye wild woods, to my roundelay;
Since the fair nymph will hear not, though I pray.

The lovely nymph is deaf to my lament,
Nor heeds the music of this rustic reed;

Wherefore my flocks and herds are ill content,
Nor bathe their hoof where grows the water weed,
Nor touch the tender herbage on the mead;
So sad, because their shepherd grieves, are they.

Listen, ye wild woods, to my roundelay;
Since the fair nymph will hear not, though I pray.

The herds are sorry for their master's moan;
The nymph heeds not her lover though he die,
The lovely nymph, whose heart is made of stone —
Nay steel, nay adamant! She still doth fly
Far, far before me, when she sees me nigh,
Even as a lamb flies from the wolf away.

Listen, ye wild woods, to my roundelay;
Since the fair nymph will hear not, though I pray.

Nay, tell her, pipe of mine, how swift doth flee
Beauty together with our years amain;
Tell her how time destroys all rarity,
Nor youth once lost can be renewed again;
Tell her to use the gifts that yet remain:
Roses and violets blossom not alway.

Listen, ye wild woods, to my roundelay;
Since the fair nymph will hear not, though I pray.

Carry, ye winds, these sweet words to her ears,
Unto the ears of my loved nymph, and tell

How many tears I shed, what bitter tears!
Beg her to pity one who loves so well:
Say that my life is frail and mutable,
And melts like rime before the rising day.

Listen, ye wild woods, to my roundelay;
Since the fair nymph will hear not, though I pray.

MOPSUS.

Less sweet, methinks the voice of waters falling
From cliffs that echo back their murmurous song;
Less sweet the summer sound of breezes calling
Through pine-tree tops sonorous all day long;
Than are thy rhymes, the soul of grief enthralling,
Thy rhymes o'er field and forest borne along:
If she but hear them, at thy feet she'll fawn. —
Lo, Thyrsis, hurrying homeward from the lawn!
[*Re-enters* THYRSIS.

ARISTAEUS.

What of the calf? Say, hast thou seen her now?

THRYSIS, *the cowherd.*

I have, and I'd as lief her throat were cut!
She almost ripped my bowels up, I vow,
Running amuck with horns well set to butt:
Nathless I've locked her in the stall below:
She's blown with grass, I tell you, saucy slut!

ARISTAEUS.

Now, prithee, let me hear what made you stay
So long upon the upland lawns away?

THYRSIS.

Walking, I spied a gentle maiden there,
Who plucked wild flowers upon the mountain side:
I scarcely think that Venus is more fair,
Of sweeter grace, most modest in her pride:
She speaks, she sings, with voice so soft and rare,
That listening streams would backward roll their tide:
Her face is snow and roses; gold her head;
All, all alone she goes, white-raimented.

ARISTAEUS.

Stay, Mopsus! I must follow: for 'tis she
Of whom I lately spoke. So, friend, farewell!

MOPSUS.

Hold, Aristaeus, lest for her or thee
Thy boldness be the cause of mischief fell!

ARISTAEUS.

Nay, death this day must be my destiny,
Unless I try my fate and break the spell.
Stay therefore, Mopsus, by the fountain stay!
I'll follow her, meanwhile, yon mountain way.

[*Exit* ARISTAEUS.

MOPSUS.

Thrysis, what thinkest thou of thy loved lord?
See'st thou that all his senses are distraught?
Couldst thou not speak some seasonable word,
Tell him what shame this idle love hath wrought?

THYRSIS.

Free speech and servitude but ill accord,
Friend Mopsus, and the hind is folly-fraught
Who rates his lord! He's wiser far than I.
To tend these kine is all my mastery.

SCENE II.

ARISTAEUS, *in pursuit of* EURYDICE.

Flee not from me, maiden!
Lo, I am thy friend!
Dearer far than life I hold thee.
List, thou beauty-laden,
To these prayers attend:
Flee not, let my arms enfold thee!
Neither wolf nor bear will grasp thee:
That I am thy friend I've told thee:
Stay thy course then; let me clasp thee!—
Since thou 'rt deaf and wilt not heed me,
Since thou 'rt still before me flying,
While I follow panting, dying,
Lend me wings, Love, wings to speed me!

[*Exit* ARISTAEUS, *pursuing* EURYDICE.

SCENE III.

A Dryad.

Sad news of lamentation and of pain,
Dear sisters, hath my voice to bear to you:
I scarcely dare to raise the dolorous strain.
Eurydice by yonder stream lies low;
The flowers are fading round her stricken head,
And the complaining waters weep their woe.
The stranger soul from that fair house hath fled;
And she, like privet pale, or white May-bloom
Untimely plucked, lies on the meadow, dead.
Hear then the cause of her disastrous doom!
A snake stole forth and stung her suddenly.
I am so burdened with this weight of gloom
That, lo, I bid you all come weep with me!

Chorus of Dryads.

Let the wide air with our complaint resound!
For all heaven's light is spent.
Let rivers break their bound,
Swollen with tears outpoured from our lament!

Fell death hath ta'en their splendour from the skies:
The stars are sunk in gloom.
Stern death hath plucked the bloom
Of nymphs: — Eurydice down-trodden lies.
Weep, Love! The woodland cries.
Weep, groves and founts;

Ye craggy mounts; you leafy dell,
Beneath whose boughs she fell,
Bend every branch in time with this sad sound.

Let the wide air with our complaint resound!

Ah, fortune pitiless! Ah, cruel snake!
Ah, luckless doom of woes!
Like a cropped summer rose,
Or lily cut, she withers on the brake.
Her face, which once did make
Our age so bright
With beauty's light, is faint and pale;
And the clear lamp doth fail,
Which shed pure splendour all the world around.

Let the wide air with our complaint resound!

Who e'er will sing so sweetly, now she's gone?
Her gentle voice to hear,
The wild winds dared not stir;
And now they breathe but sorrow, moan for moan:
So many joys are flown,
Such jocund days
Doth Death erase with her sweet eyes!
Bid earth's lament arise,
And make our dirge through heaven and sea rebound!

Let the wide air with our complaint resound!

A Dryad.

'Tis surely Orpheus, who hath reached the hill,
With harp in hand, glad-eyed and light of heart!
He thinks that his dear love is living still.
My news will stab him with a sudden smart:
An unforeseen and unexpected blow
Wounds worst and stings the bosom's tenderest part.
Death hath disjoined the truest love, I know,
That nature yet to this low world revealed,
And quenched the flame in its most charming glow.
Go, sisters, hasten ye to yonder field,
Where on the sward lies slain Eurydice;
Strew her with flowers and grasses! I must yield
This man the measure of his misery.

[*Exeunt* Dryads. *Enter* Orpheus, *singing*.

Orpheus.

Musa, triumphales titulos et gesta canamus
Herculis, et forti monstra subacta manu;
Ut timidae matri pressos ostenderit angues,
Intrepidusque fero riserit ore puer.

A Dryad.

Orpheus, I bring thee bitter news. Alas!
Thy nymph who was so beautiful, is slain!
Flying from Aristaeus o'er the grass,
What time she reached yon stream that threads the plain,

A snake which lurked mid flowers where she did pass,
Pierced her fair foot with his envenomed bane:
So fierce, so potent was the sting, that she
Died in mid course. Ah, woe that this should be!

[ORPHEUS *turns to go in silence.*

MNESILLUS, *the Satyr.*

Mark ye how sunk in woe
The poor wretch forth doth pass,
And may not answer, for his grief, one word?
On some lone shore, unheard,
Far, far away, he'll go,
And pour his heart forth to the winds, alas!
I'll follow and observe if he
Moves with his moan the hills to sympathy.

[*Follows* ORPHEUS.

ORPHEUS.

Let us lament, O lyre disconsolate!
Our wonted music is in tune no more.
Lament we while the heavens revolve, and let
The nightingale be conquered on Love's shore!
O heaven, O earth, O sea, O cruel fate!
How shall I bear a pang so passing sore?
Eurydice, my love! O life of mine!
On earth I will no more without thee pine!
I will go down unto the doors of Hell,
And see if mercy may be found below:

Perchance we shall reverse fate's spoken spell
With tearful songs and words of honeyed woe:
Perchance will Death be pitiful; for well
With singing have we turned the streams that flow;
Moved stones, together hind and tiger drawn,
And made trees dance upon the forest lawn.

[*Passes from sight on his way to Hades.*

MNESILLUS.

The staff of Fate is strong
And will not lightly bend,
Nor yet the stubborn gates of steely Hell.
Nay, I can see full well
His life will not be long:
Those downward feet no more will earthward wend.
What marvel if they lose the light,
Who make blind Love their guide by day and night!

SCENE IV.

ORPHEUS, *at the gate of Hell.*

Pity, nay pity for a lover's moan!
Ye Powers of Hell, let pity reign in you!
To your dark regions led me Love alone:
Downward upon his wings of light I flew.
Hush, Cerberus! Howl not by Pluto's throne!
For when you hear my tale of misery, you,
Nor you alone, but all who here abide
In this blind world, will weep by Lethe's tide.

There is no need, ye Furies, thus to rage;
To dart those snakes that in your tresses twine:
Knew ye the cause of this my pilgrimage,
Ye would lie down and join your moans with mine.
Let this poor wretch but pass, who war doth wage
With heaven, the elements, the powers divine!
I beg for pity or for death. No more!
But open, ope Hell's adamantine door!

[ORPHEUS *enters Hell.*

PLUTO.

What man is he who with his golden lyre
Hath moved the gates that never move,
While the dead folk repeat his dirge of love?
The rolling stone no more doth tire
Swart Sisyphus on yonder hill;
And Tantalus with water slakes his fire:
The groans of mangled Tityos are still;
Ixion's wheel forgets to fly;
The Danaids their urns can fill:
I hear no more the tortured spirits cry;
But all find rest in that sweet harmony.

PROSERPINE.

Dear consort, since, compelled by love of thee,
I left the light of heaven serene,
And came to reign in hell, a sombre queen;
The charm of tenderest sympathy

Hath never yet had power to turn
My stubborn heart, or draw forth tears from me.
Now with desire for yon sweet voice I yearn;
Nor is there aught so dear
As that delight. Nay, be not stern
To this one prayer! Relax thy brows severe,
And rest awhile with me that song to hear!

[ORPHEUS *stands before the throne.*

ORPHEUS.

Ye rulers of the people lost in gloom,
Who see no more the jocund light of day!
Ye who inherit all things that the womb
Of Nature and the elements display!
Hear ye the grief that draws me to the tomb!
Love, cruel Love, hath led me on this way:
Not to chain Cerberus I hither come,
But to bring back my mistress to her home.
A serpent hidden among flowers and leaves
Stole my fair mistress — nay, my heart — from me:
Wherefore my wounded life for ever grieves,
Nor can I stand against this agony.
Still, if some fragrance lingers yet and cleaves
Of your famed love unto your memory,
If of that ancient rape you think at all,
Give back Eurydice! — On you I call.
All things ere long unto this bourne descend:
All mortal lives to you return at last:

Whate'er the moon hath circled, in the end
Must fade and perish in your empire vast:
Some sooner and some later hither wend;
Yet all upon this pathway shall have passed:
This of our footsteps is the final goal;
And then we dwell for aye in your control.
Therefore the nymph I love is left for you
When nature leads her deathward in due time:
But now you've cropped the tendrils as they grew,
The grapes unripe, while yet the sap did climb:
Who reaps the young blades wet with April dew,
Nor waits till summer hath o'erpassed her prime?
Give back, give back my hope one little day!—
Not for a gift, but for a loan I pray.
I pray not to you by the waves forlorn
Of marshy Styx or dismal Acheron,
By Chaos where the mighty world was born,
Or by the sounding flames of Phlegethon;
But by the fruit which charmed thee on that morn
When thou didst leave our world for this dread throne!
O queen! if thou reject this pleading breath,
I will no more return, but ask for death!

PROSERPINE.

Husband, I never guessed
That in our realm oppressed
Pity could find a home to dwell:
But now I know that mercy teems in Hell.

I see Death weep; her breast
Is shaken by those tears that faultless fell.
Let then thy laws severe for him be swayed
By love, by song, by the just prayers he prayed!

PLUTO.

She's thine, but at this price:
Bend not on her thine eyes,
Till mid the souls that live she stay.
See that thou turn not back upon the way!
Check all fond thoughts that rise!
Else will thy love be torn from thee away.
I am well pleased that song so rare as thine
The might of my dread sceptre should incline.

SCENE V.

ORPHEUS, *sings.*

Ite triumphales circum mea tempora lauri.
Vicimus Eurydicen: reddita vita mihi est.
Haec mea praecipue victoria digna coronâ.
Credimus? an lateri juncta puella meo?

EURYDICE.

Ah me! Thy love too great
Hath lost not thee alone!
I am torn from thee by strong Fate.
No more I am thine own.

In vain I stretch these arms. Back, back to Hell
I'm drawn, I'm drawn. My Orpheus, fare thee well!

[EURYDICE *disappears.*

ORPHEUS.

Who hath laid laws on Love?
Will pity not be given
For one short look so full thereof?
Since I am robbed of heaven,
Since all my joy so great is turned to pain,
I will go back and plead with Death again!

[TISIPHONE *blocks his way.*

TISIPHONE.

Nay, seek not back to turn!
Vain is thy weeping, all thy words are vain.
Eurydice may not complain
Of aught but thee — albeit her grief is great.
Vain are thy verses 'gainst the voice of Fate!
How vain thy song! For Death is stern!
Try not the backward path: thy feet refrain!
The laws of the abyss are fixed and firm remain.

SCENE VI.

ORPHEUS.

What sorrow-laden song shall e'er be found
To match the burden of my matchless woe?
How shall I make the fount of tears abound,
To weep apace with grief's unmeasured flow?
Salt tears I'll waste upon the barren ground,

So long as life delays me here below;
And since my fate hath wrought me wrong so sore,
I swear I'll never love a woman more!
Henceforth I'll pluck the buds of opening spring,
The bloom of youth when life is loveliest,
Ere years have spoiled the beauty which they bring:
This love, I swear, is sweetest, softest, best!
Of female charms let no one speak or sing;
Since she is slain who ruled within my breast.
He who would seek my converse, let him see
That ne'er he talk of woman's love to me!
How pitiful is he who changes mind
For woman! for her love laments or grieves!
Who suffers her in chains his will to bind,
Or trusts her words lighter than withered leaves,
Her loving looks more treacherous than the wind!
A thousand times she veers; to nothing cleaves:
Follows who flies; from him who follows, flees;
And comes and goes like waves on stormy seas!
High Jove confirms the truth of what I said,
Who, caught and bound in love's delightful snare,
Enjoys in heaven his own bright Ganymed:
Phoebus on earth had Hyacinth the fair:
Hercules, conqueror of the world, was led
Captive to Hylas by this love so rare.—
Advice for husbands! Seek divorce, and fly
Far, far away from female company!
[*Enter a* MAENAD *leading a train of* BACCHANTES.

A Maenad.

Ho! Sisters! Up! Alive!
See him who doth our sex deride!
Hunt him to death, the slave!
Thou snatch the thyrsus! Thou this oak-tree rive!
Cast down this doeskin and that hide!
We'll wreak our fury on the knave!
Yea, he shall feel our wrath, the knave!
He shall yield up his hide
Riven as woodmen fir-trees rive!
No power his life can save;
Since women he hath dared deride!
Ho! To him, sisters! Ho! Alive!
[Orpheus *is chased off the scene and slain: the* Maenads *then return.*

A Maenad.

Ho! Bacchus! Ho! I yield thee thanks for this!
Through all the woodland we the wretch have borne:
So that each root is slaked with blood of his:
Yea, limb from limb his body have we torn
Through the wild forest with a fearful bliss:
His gore hath bathed the earth by ash and thorn!—
Go then! thy blame on lawful wedlock fling!
Ho! Bacchus! take the victim that we bring!

Chorus of Maenads.

Bacchus! we all must follow thee!
Bacchus! Bacchus! Ohé! Ohé!

With ivy coronals, bunch and berry,
Crown we our heads to worship thee!
Thou hast bidden us to make merry
Day and night with jollity!
Drink then! Bacchus is here! Drink free,
And hand ye the drinking-cup to me!
Bacchus! we all must follow thee!
Bacchus! Bacchus! Ohé! Ohé!

See, I have emptied my horn already:
Stretch hither your beaker to me, I pray:
Are the hills and the lawns where we roam unsteady?
Or is it my brain that reels away?
Let every one run to and fro through the hay,
As ye see me run! Ho! after me!
Bacchus! we all must follow thee!
Bacchus! Bacchus! Ohé! Ohé!

Methinks I am dropping in swoon or slumber:
Am I drunken or sober, yes or no?
What are these weights my feet encumber?
You too are tipsy, well I know!
Let every one do as ye see me do,
Let every one drink and quaff like me!
Bacchus! we all must follow thee!
Bacchus! Bacchus! Ohé! Ohé!

Cry Bacchus! Cry Bacchus! Be blithe and merry,
Tossing wine down your throats away!

Let sleep then come and our gladness bury:
Drink you, and you, and you, while ye may!
Dancing is over for me to-day.
Let every one cry aloud Evohé!
Bacchus! we all must follow thee!
Bacchus! Bacchus! Ohé! Ohé!

Though an English translation can do little toward rendering the facile graces of Poliziano's style, that 'roseate fluency' for which it has been praised by his Italian admirers, the main qualities of the 'Orfeo' as a composition may be traced in this rough copy. Of dramatic power, of that mastery over the deeper springs of human nature which distinguished the first effort of the English muse in Marlowe's plays, there is but little. A certain adaptation of the language to the characters, as in the rudeness of Thyrsis when contrasted with the rustic elegance of Aristæus, a touch of simple feeling in Eurydice's lyrical outcry of farewell, a discrimination between the tender sympathy of Proserpine and Pluto's stern relenting, a spirited presentation of the Bacchanalian *furore* in the Mænads, an attempt to model the Satyr Mnesillus as apart from human nature and yet sympa-

thetic to its anguish, these points constitute the chief dramatic features of the melodrama. Orpheus himself is a purely lyrical personage. Of character, he can scarcely be said to have anything marked; and his part rises to its height precisely in that passage where the lyrist has to be displayed. Before the gates of Hades and the throne of Proserpine he sings, and his singing is the right outpouring of a poet's soul; each octave resumes the theme of the last stanza with a swell of utterance, a crescendo of intonation that recalls the passionate and unpremeditated descant of a bird upon the boughs alone. To this true quality of music is added the persuasiveness of pleading. That the violin melody of his incomparable song is lost, must be reckoned a great misfortune. We have good reason to believe that the part of Orpheus was taken by Messer Baccio Ugolini, singing to the viol. Here too it may be mentioned that a *tondo* in monochrome, painted by Signorelli among the arabesques at Orvieto, shows Orpheus at the throne of Pluto, habited as a poet with the laurel crown and playing on a violin of antique form. It would be interesting to

know whether a rumour of the Mantuan pageant had reached the ears of the Cortonese painter.

If the whole of the 'Orfeo' had been conceived and executed with the same artistic feeling as the chief act, it would have been a really fine poem independently of its historical interest. But we have only to turn the page and read the lament uttered for the loss of Eurydice, in order to perceive Poliziano's incapacity for dealing with his hero in a situation of greater difficulty. The pathos which might have made us sympathise with Orpheus in his misery, the passion, approaching to madness, which might have justified his misogyny, are absent. It is difficult not to feel that in this climax of his anguish he was a poor creature, and that the Mænads served him right. Nothing illustrates the defect of real dramatic imagination better than this failure to dignify the catastrophe. Gifted with a fine lyrical inspiration, Poliziano seems to have already felt the Bacchic chorus which forms so brilliant a termination to his play, and to have forgotten his duty to the unfortunate Orpheus, whose sorrow for Eurydice is stultified and made

unmeaning by the prosaic expression of a base resolve. It may indeed be said in general that the 'Orfeo' is a good poem only where the situation is not so much dramatic as lyrical, and that its finest passage — the scene in Hades — was fortunately for its author one in which the dramatic motive had to be lyrically expressed. In this respect, as in many others, the 'Orfeo' combines the faults and merits of the Italian attempts at melo-tragedy. To break a butterfly upon the wheel is, however, no fit function of criticism: and probably no one would have smiled more than the author of this improvisation, at the thought of its being gravely dissected just four hundred years after the occasion it was meant to serve had long been given over to oblivion.

NOTE.

Poliziano's 'Orfeo' was dedicated to Messer Carlo Canale, the husband of that famous Vannozza who bore Lucrezia and Cesare Borgia to Alexander VI. As first published in 1494, and as republished from time to time up to the year 1776, it carried the title of 'La Favola di Orfeo,' and was not divided into acts. Frequent stage-directions sufficed, as in the case of Florentine 'Sacre Rappresentazioni,' for the indication

of the scenes. In this earliest redaction of the 'Orfeo' the chorus of the Dryads, the part of Mnesillus, the lyrical speeches of Proserpine and Pluto, and the first lyric of the Mænads are either omitted or represented by passages in *ottava rima*. In the year 1776 the Padre Ireneo Affò printed at Venice a new version of 'Orfeo, Tragedia di Messer Angelo Poliziano,' collated by him from two MSS. This play is divided into five acts, severally entitled 'Pastoricus,' 'Nymphas Habet,' 'Heroïcus,' 'Necromanticus,' and 'Bacchanalis.' The stage-directions are given partly in Latin, partly in Italian; and instead of the 'Announcement of the Feast' by Mercury, a prologue consisting of two octave stanzas is appended. A Latin Sapphic ode in praise of the Cardinal Gonzaga, which was interpolated in the first version, is omitted, and certain changes are made in the last soliloquy of Orpheus. There is little doubt, I think, that the second version, first given to the press by the Padre Affò, was Poliziano's own recension of his earlier composition. I have therefore followed it in the main, except that I have not thought it necessary to observe the somewhat pedantic division into acts, and have preferred to use the original 'Announcement of the Feast,' which proves the integral connection between this ancient secular play and the Florentine Mystery or 'Sacra Rappresentazione.' The last soliloquy of Orpheus, again, has been freely translated by me from both versions for reasons which will be obvious to students of the original. I have yet to make a remark upon one detail of my translation. In line 390 (part of the first lyric of the Mænads) the Italian gives us: —

Spezzata come il fabbro il cribro spezza.

This means literally: 'Riven as a blacksmith rives a sieve or boulter.' Now sieves are made in Tuscany of a plate of iron, pierced with holes; and the image would therefore be familiar to an Italian. I have, however, preferred to translate thus:—

Riven as woodmen fir-trees rive,

instead of giving:—

Riven as blacksmiths boulters rive,

because I thought that the second and faithful version would be unintelligible as well as unpoetical for English readers.

The Bibelot

"THAT *book of* Studies in the Renaissance, *even with the rest of Pater to choose from, seems to me sometimes to be the most beautiful book of prose in our literature.*"[1] *And just as the most brilliantly written life in Vasari is that dealing with Da Vinci, so the essay we here reprint stands in the same unique relation to all other subjects treated by Pater: beyond it the forces of English prose style have not yet gone — may never go.*

"*Fair strange faces of women full of dim doubt and faint scorn; touched by the shadow of an obscure fate; eager and weary as it seems at once, pale and fervent with patience or passion; allure and perplex the eyes and thoughts of men.*"[2] *One may fairly take these words of the youthful Swinburne (who in the spring of 1864 saw and described certain designs of Leonardo's at Florence,) as the earliest utterance of*

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1 *Arthur Symons:* Studies in Two Literatures *(London, 1897), p. 171.*

2 *See* Essays and Studies *by A. C. Swinburne (London, 1875), pp. 314-357.*

that Æsthetic School which was shortly to culminate in Pater's criticism.

Not therefore as a discovery of strange new things, but as a sublimated reiteration of facts already dimly divined by Da Vinci's contemporaries should this study of him appeal to us.

Surely the Lady Beauty who dwells on earth, whom Rossetti sang and painted as Venus Verticordia, was known also to Leonardo. Not indeed as Dante conceived her, the glorified Beatrice 'gone up into high Heaven': rather as a supreme symbol of the Love which 'is not glad or sorry as men deem,' seen for all time in the subtle smile irradiating the face of Mona Lisa.

FOR MARCH:

LYRICS

By

COSMO MONKHOUSE.

LEONARDO DA VINCI
By
WALTER PATER.

For

OUR LADY OF THE ROCKS.

BY LEONARDO DA VINCI.

Mother, is this the darkness of the end,
The Shadow of Death? and is that outer sea
Infinite imminent Eternity?
And does the death-pang by man's seed sustained
In Time's each instant cause thy face to bend
Its silent prayer upon the Son, while He
Blesses the dead with His hand silently
To His long day which hours no more offend?

Mother of grace, the pass is difficult,
Keen as these rocks, and the bewildered souls
Throng it like echoes, blindly shuddering through.
Thy name, O Lord, each spirit's voice extols,
Whose peace abides in the dark avenue
Amid the bitterness of things occult.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.

"LEONARDO is the wizard or diviner; to him the Renaissance offers her mystery and lends her magic. . . . While he was a boy, says Vasari, Leonardo modelled in terra-cotta certain heads of women smiling. . . . When an old man, he left *Mona Lisa* on the easel not quite finished, the portrait of a subtle, shadowy, uncertain smile. This smile, this enigmatic revelation of a movement in the soul, this seductive ripple on the surface of the human personality, was to Leonardo a symbol of the secret of the world, an image of the universal mystery. It haunted him all through his life, and innumerable were the attempts he made to render by external form the magic of this fugitive and evanescent charm. . . . .

He believed in solving the insoluble. . . . Having caught the Proteus of the world, he tried to grasp him; but the god changed shape beneath his touch. Having surprised Silenus asleep, he begged from him a song; but the song Silenus sang was so marvellous in its variety, so subtle in its modulations, that Leonardo could no more than recall scattered phrases. His Proteus was the spirit of the Renaissance. The Silenus from whom he forced the song was the double nature of man and of the world."

SYMONDS, *Renaissance in Italy* vol. III, pp. 312-327.

LEONARDO DA VINCI.

HOMO MINISTER ET INTERPRES NATURÆ.

In Vasari's life of Leonardo da Vinci as we now read it there are some variations from the first edition. There, the painter who has fixed the outward type of Christ for succeeding centuries was a bold speculator, holding lightly by other men's beliefs, setting philosophy above Christianity. Words of his, trenchant enough to justify this impression, are not recorded, and would have been out of keeping with a genius of which one characteristic is the tendency to lose itself in a refined and graceful mystery. The suspicion was but the time-honoured mode in which the world stamps its appreciation of one who has thoughts for himself alone, his high indifference, his intolerance of the common forms of things; and in the second edition the image was changed into something fainter and more conventional. But it is still by a certain mystery in his work, and something enigmatical beyond the usual measure of great men, that he fascinates, or perhaps half repels. His life is one of sudden revolts, with intervals in which he works not at all, or apart from the main

scope of his work. By a strange fortune the works on which his more popular fame rested disappeared early from the world, as the *Battle of the Standard;* or are mixed obscurely with the work of meaner hands, as the *Last Supper*. His type of beauty is so exotic that it fascinates a larger number than it delights, and seems more than that of any other artist to reflect ideas and views and some scheme of the world within; so that he seemed to his contemporaries to be the possessor of some unsanctified and secret wisdom; as to Michelet and others to have anticipated modern ideas. He trifles with his genius, and crowds all his chief work into a few tormented years of later life; yet he is so possessed by his genius that he passes unmoved through the most tragic events, overwhelming his country and friends, like one who comes across them by chance on some secret errand.

His *legend*, as the French say, with the anecdotes which every one knows, is one of the most brilliant in Vasari. Later writers merely copied it, until, in 1804, Carlo Amoretti applied to it a criticism which left hardly a date fixed, and not one of those

anecdotes untouched. The various questions thus raised have since that time become, one after another, subjects of special study, and mere antiquarianism has in this direction little more to do. For others remain the editing of the thirteen books of his manuscripts, and the separation by technical criticism of what in his reputed works is really his, from what is only half his, or the work of his pupils. But a lover of strange souls may still analyse for himself the impression made on him by those works, and try to reach through it a definition of the chief elements of Leonardo's genius. The *legend*, corrected and enlarged by its critics, may now and then intervene to support the results of this analysis.

His life has three divisions — thirty years at Florence, nearly twenty years at Milan, then nineteen years of wandering, till he sinks to rest under the protection of Francis the First at the *Château de Clou*. The dishonour of illegitimacy hangs over his birth. Piero Antonio, his father, was of a noble Florentine House, of Vinci in the *Val d'Arno*, and Leonardo, brought up delicately among the true children of that house, was

the love-child of his youth, with the keen, puissant nature such children often have. We see him in his youth fascinating all men by his beauty, improvising music and songs, buying the caged birds and setting them free, as he walked the streets of Florence, fond of odd bright dresses and spirited horses.

From his earliest years he designed many objects, and constructed models in relief, of which Vasari mentions some of women smiling. His father, pondering over this promise in the child, took him to the workshop of Andrea del Verrocchio, then the most famous artist in Florence. Beautiful objects lay about there — reliquaries, pyxes, silver images for the pope's chapel at Rome, strange fancy-work of the middle age, keeping odd company with fragments of antiquity, then but lately discovered. Another student Leonardo may have seen there — a boy into whose soul the level light and aërial illusions of Italian sunsets had passed, in after days famous as Perugino. Verrocchio was an artist of the earlier Florentine type, carver, painter, and worker in metals, in one; designer, not of pictures only, but of all things for sacred or household use,

drinking-vessels, ambries, instruments of music, making them all fair to look upon, filling the common ways of life with the reflexion of some far-off brightness; and years of patience had refined his hand till his work was now sought after from distant places.

It happened that Verrocchio was employed by the brethren of Vallombrosa to paint the Baptism of Christ, and Leonardo was allowed to finish an angel in the left-hand corner. It was one of those moments in which the progress of a great thing — here, that of the art of Italy — presses hard and sharp on the happiness of an individual, through whose discouragement and decrease, humanity, in more fortunate persons, comes a step nearer to its final success.

For beneath the cheerful exterior of the mere well-paid craftsman, chasing brooches for the copes of *Santa Maria Novella*, or twisting metal screens for the tombs of the Medici, lay the ambitious desire of expanding the destiny of Italian art by a larger knowledge and insight into things, a purpose in art not unlike Leonardo's still unconscious purpose; and often, in the modelling of

drapery, or of a lifted arm, or of hair cast back from the face there came to him something of the freer manner and richer humanity of a later age. But in this *Baptism* the pupil had surpassed the master; and Verrocchio turned away as one stunned, and as if his sweet earlier work must thereafter be distasteful to him, from the bright animated angel of Leonardo's hand.

The angel may still be seen in Florence, a space of sunlight in the cold, laboured old picture; but the legend is true only in sentiment, for painting had always been the art by which Verrocchio set least store. And as in a sense he anticipates Leonardo, so to the last Leonardo recalls the studio of Verrocchio, in the love of beautiful toys, such as the vessel of water for a mirror, and lovely needle-work about the implicated hands in the *Modesty and Vanity*, and of reliefs, like those cameos which in the *Virgin of the Balances* hang all round the girdle of Saint Michael, and of bright variegated stones, such as the agates in the *Saint Anne*, and in a hieratic preciseness and grace, as of a sanctuary swept and garnished. Amid all the cunning and intricacy of his Lombard

manner this never left him. Much of it there must have been in that lost picture of *Paradise*, which he prepared as a cartoon for tapestry, to be woven in the looms of Flanders. It was the perfection of the older Florentine style of miniature-painting, with patient putting of each leaf upon the trees and each flower in the grass, where the first man and woman were standing.

And because it was the perfection of that style, it awoke in Leonardo some seed of discontent which lay in the secret places of his nature. For the way to perfection is through a series of disgusts; and this picture — all that he had done so far in his life at Florence — was after all in the old slight manner. His art, if it was to be something in the world, must be weighted with more of the meaning of nature and purpose of humanity. Nature was "the true mistress of higher intelligences." So he plunged into the study of nature. And in doing this he followed the manner of the older students; he brooded over the hidden virtues of plants and crystals, the lines traced by the stars as they moved in the sky, over the correspondences which exist between the different

orders of living things, through which, to eyes opened, they interpret each other; and for years he seemed to those about him as one listening to a voice, silent for other men.

He learned here the art of going deep, of tracking the sources of expression to their subtlest retreats, the power of an intimate presence in the things he handled. He did not at once or entirely desert his art; only he was no longer the cheerful, objective painter, through whose soul, as through clear glass, the bright figures of Florentine life, only made a little mellower and more pensive by the transit, passed on to the white wall. He wasted many days in curious tricks of design, seeming to lose himself in the spinning of intricate devices of lines and colours. He was smitten with a love of the impossible — the perforation of mountains, changing the course of rivers, raising great buildings, such as the church of *San Giovanni*, in the air; all those feats for the performance of which natural magic professed to have the key. Later writers, indeed, see in these efforts an anticipation of modern mechanics; in him they were rather dreams, thrown off by the over-

wrought and labouring brain. Two ideas were especially fixed in him, as reflexes of things that had touched his brain in childhood beyond the measure of other impressions — the smiling of women and the motion of great waters.

And in such studies some interfusion of the extremes of beauty and terror shaped itself, as an image that might be seen and touched, in the mind of this gracious youth, so fixed that for the rest of his life it never left him; and as catching glimpses of it in the strange eyes or hair of chance people, he would follow such about the streets of Florence till the sun went down, of whom many sketches of his remain. Some of these are full of a curious beauty, that remote beauty apprehended only by those who have sought it carefully; who, starting with acknowledged types of beauty, have refined as far upon these, as these refine upon the world of common forms. But mingled inextricably with this there is an element of mockery also; so that, whether in sorrow or scorn, he caricatures Dante even. Legions of grotesques sweep under his hand; for has not nature too her grotesques — the rent

rock, the distorting light of evening on lonely roads, the unveiled structure of man in the embryo, or the skeleton?

All these swarming fancies unite in the *Medusa* of the *Uffizii*. Vasari's story of an earlier Medusa, painted on a wooden shield, is perhaps an invention; and yet, properly told, has more of the air of truth about it than anything else in the whole legend. For its real subject is not the serious work of a man, but the experiment of a child. The lizards and glow-worms and other strange small creatures which haunt an Italian vineyard bring before one the whole picture of a child's life in a Tuscan dwelling — half castle, half farm — and are as true to nature as the pretended astonishment of the father for whom the boy has prepared a surprise. It was not in play that he painted that other Medusa, the one great picture which he left behind him in Florence. The subject has been treated in various ways; Leonardo alone cuts to its centre; he alone realises it as the head of a corpse, exercising its powers through all the circumstances of death. What may be called the fascination of corruption penetrates in every touch its

exquisitely finished beauty. About the dainty lines of the cheek the bat flits unheeded. The delicate snakes seem literally strangling each other in terrified struggle to escape from the Medusa brain. The hue which violent death always brings with it is in the features: features singularly massive and grand, as we catch them inverted, in a dexterous foreshortening, sloping upwards, almost sliding down upon us, crown foremost, like a great calm stone against which the wave of serpents breaks. But it is a subject that may well be left to the beautiful verses of Shelley.

The science of that age was all divination, clairvoyance, unsubjected to our exact modern formulas, seeking in an instant of vision to concentrate a thousand experiences. Later writers, thinking only of the well-ordered treatise on painting which a Frenchman, Raffaelle du Fresne, a hundred years afterwards, compiled from Leonardo's bewildered manuscripts, written strangely, as his manner was, from right to left, have imagined a rigid order in his inquiries. But this rigid order was little in accordance with the restlessness of his character; and if we think

of him as the mere reasoner who subjects design to anatomy, and composition to mathematical rules, we shall hardly have of him that impression which those about him received from him. Poring over his crucibles, making experiments with colour, trying, by a strange variation of the alchemist's dream, to discover the secret, not of an elixir to make man's natural life immortal, but rather of giving immortality to the subtlest and most delicate effects of painting, he seemed to them rather the sorcerer or the magician, possessed of curious secrets and a hidden knowledge, living in a world of which he alone possessed the key. What his philosophy seems to have been most like is that of Paracelsus or Cardan; and much of the spirit of the older alchemy still hangs about it, with its confidence in short cuts and odd byways to knowledge. To him philosophy was to be something giving strange swiftness and double sight, divining the sources of springs beneath the earth or of expression beneath the human countenance, clairvoyant of occult gifts in common or uncommon things, in the reed at the brook-side, or the star which draws near to

us but once in a century. How, in this way, the clear purpose was overclouded, the fine chaser's hand perplexed, we but dimly see; the mystery which at no point quite lifts from Leonardo's life is deepest here. But it is certain that at one period of his life he had almost ceased to be an artist.

The year 1483 — the year of the birth of Raffaelle and the thirty-first of Leonardo's life — is fixed as the date of his visit to Milan by the letter in which he recommends himself to Ludovico Sforza, and offers to tell him, for a price, strange secrets in the art of war. It was that Sforza who murdered his young nephew by slow poison, yet was so susceptible of religious impressions that he blended mere earthly passions with a sort of religious sentimentalism, and who took for his device the mulberry-tree — symbol, in its long delay and sudden yielding of flowers and fruit together, of a wisdom which economises all forces for an opportunity of sudden and sure effect. The fame of Leonardo had gone before him, and he was to model a colossal statue of Francesco, the first Duke of Milan. As for Leonardo himself, he came not as an artist at all, or

careful of the fame of one; but as a player on the harp, a strange harp of silver of his own construction, shaped in some curious likeness to a horse's skull. The capricious spirit of Ludovico was susceptible also of the charm of music, and Leonardo's nature had a kind of spell in it. Fascination is always the word descriptive of him. No portrait of his youth remains; but all tends to make us believe that up to this time some charm of voice and aspect, strong enough to balance the disadvantage of his birth, had played about him. His physical strength was great; it was said that he could bend a horse-shoe like a coil of lead.

The *Duomo*, the work of artists from beyond the Alps, so fantastic to the eye of a Florentine used to the mellow, unbroken surfaces of Giotto and Arnolfo, was then in all its freshness; and below, in the streets of Milan, moved a people as fantastic, changeful, and dreamlike. To Leonardo least of all men could there be anything poisonous in the exotic flowers of sentiment which grew there. It was a life of brilliant sins and exquisite amusements: Leonardo became a celebrated designer of pageants:

and it suited the quality of his genius, composed in almost equal parts of curiosity and the desire of beauty, to take things as they came.

Curiosity and the desire of beauty — these are the two elementary forces in Leonardo's genius; curiosity often in conflict with the desire of beauty, but generating, in union with it, a type of subtle and curious grace.

The movement of the fifteenth century was twofold; partly the Renaissance, partly also the coming of what is called the "modern spirit," with its realism, its appeal to experience: it comprehended a return to antiquity, and a return to nature. Raffaelle represents the return to antiquity, and Leonardo the return to nature. In this return to nature, he was seeking to satisfy a boundless curiosity by her perpetual surprises, a microscopic sense of finish by her *finesse*, or delicacy of operation, that *subtilitas naturae* which Bacon notices. So we find him often in intimate relations with men of science, — with Fra Luca Paccioli the mathematician, and the anatomist Marc Antonio della Torre. His observations and experiments fill thirteen volumes of manuscript;

and those who can judge describe him as anticipating long before, by rapid intuition, the later ideas of science. He explained the obscure light of the unilluminated part of the moon, knew that the sea had once covered the mountains which contain shells, and the gathering of the equatorial waters above the polar.

He who thus penetrated into the most secret parts of nature preferred always the more to the less remote, what, seeming exceptional, was an instance of law more refined, the construction about things of a peculiar atmosphere and mixed lights. He paints flowers with such curious felicity that different writers have attributed to him a fondness for particular flowers, as Clement the cyclamen, and Rio the jasmin; while, at Venice, there is a stray leaf from his portfolio dotted all over with studies of violets and the wild rose. In him first appears the taste for what is *bizarre* or *recherché* in landscape; hollow places full of the green shadow of bituminous rocks, ridged reefs of trap-rock which cut the water into quaint sheets of light — their exact antitype is in our own western seas; all the solemn effects

of moving water; you may follow it springing from its distant source among the rocks on the heath of the *Madonna of the Balances*, passing, as a little fall, into the treacherous calm of the *Madonna of the Lake*, next, as a goodly river, below the cliffs of the *Madonna of the Rocks*, washing the white walls of its distant villages, stealing out in a network of divided streams in *La Gioconda* to the seashore of the *Saint Anne* — that delicate place, where the wind passes like the hand of some fine etcher over the surface, and the untorn shells are lying thick upon the sand, and the tops of the rocks, to which the waves never rise, are green with grass, grown fine as hair. It is the landscape, not of dreams or of fancy, but of places far withdrawn, and hours selected from a thousand with a miracle of *finesse*. Through Leonardo's strange veil of sight things reach him so; in no ordinary night or day, but as in faint light of eclipse, or in some brief interval of falling rain at daybreak, or through deep water.

And not into nature only; but he plunged also into human personality, and became above all a painter of portraits; faces of a

modelling more skilful than has been seen before or since, embodied with a reality which almost amounts to illusion, on dark air. To take a character as it was, and delicately sound its stops, suited one so curious in observation, curious in invention. So he painted the portraits of Ludovico's mistresses, Lucretia Crivelli and Cecilia Galerani the poetess, of Ludovico himself, and the Duchess Beatrice. The portrait of Cecilia Galerani is lost, but that of Lucretia Crivelli has been identified with *La Belle Feronière* of the Louvre, and Ludovico's pale, anxious face still remains in the Ambrosian library. Opposite is the portrait of Beatrice d'Este, in whom Leonardo seems to have caught some presentiment of early death, painting her precise and grave, full of the refinement of the dead, in sad earth-coloured raiment, set with pale stones.

Sometimes this curiosity came in conflict with the desire of beauty; it tended to make him go too far below that outside of things in which art begins and ends. This struggle between the reason and its ideas, and the senses, the desire of beauty, is the key to Leonardo's life at Milan — his restlessness,

his endless re-touchings, his odd experiments with colour. How much must he leave unfinished, how much recommence! His problem was the transmutation of ideas into images. What he had attained so far had been the mastery of that earlier Florentine style, with its naïve and limited sensuousness. Now he was to entertain in this narrow medium those divinations of a humanity too wide for it, that larger vision of the opening world, which is only not too much for the great, irregular art of Shakspere; and everywhere the effort is visible in the work of his hands. This agitation, this perpetual delay, give him an air of weariness and *ennui*. To others he seems to be aiming at an impossible effect, to do something that art, that painting, can never do. Often the expression of physical beauty at this or that point seems strained and marred in the effort, as in those heavy German foreheads — too German and heavy for perfect beauty.

For there was a touch of Germany in that genius which, as Goethe said, had "thought itself weary" — *müde sich gedacht*. What an anticipation of modern Germany, for

instance, in that debate on the question whether sculpture or painting is the nobler art.[1] But there is this difference between him and the German, that, with all that curious science, the German would have thought nothing more was needed; and the name of Goethe himself reminds one how great for the artist may be the danger of over-much science; how Goethe, who, in the *Elective Affinities* and the first part of *Faust*, does transmute ideas into images, who wrought many such transmutations, did not invariably find the spell-word, and in the second part of *Faust* presents us with a mass of science which has almost no artistic character at all. But Leonardo will never work till the happy moment comes — that moment of *bien-être*, which to imaginative men is a moment of invention. On this moment he waits; other moments are but a preparation, or after-taste of it. Few men distinguish between them as jealously as he did. Hence, so many flaws even in the choicest work. But for Leonardo the dis-

1 How princely, how characteristic of Leonardo, the answer, *Quante più, un' arte porta seco fatica di corpo, tanto più è vile!*

tinction is absolute, and, in the moment of *bien-être*, the alchemy complete: the idea is stricken into colour and imagery: a cloudy mysticism is refined to a subdued and graceful mystery, and painting pleases the eye while it satisfies the soul.

This curious beauty is seen above all in his drawings, and in these chiefly in the abstract grace of the bounding lines. Let us take some of these drawings, and pause over them awhile; and, first, one of those at Florence — the heads of a woman and a little child, set side by side, but each in its own separate frame. First of all, there is much pathos in the reappearance in the fuller curves of the face of the child, of the sharper, more chastened lines of the worn and older face, which leaves no doubt that the heads are those of a little child and its mother. A feeling for maternity is indeed always characteristic of Leonardo; and this feeling is further indicated here by the half-humorous pathos of the diminutive, rounded shoulders of the child. You may note a like pathetic power in drawings of a young man seated in a stooping posture, his face in his hands, as in sorrow; of a slave sitting in an

uneasy inclined posture, in some brief interval of rest; of a small Madonna and Child, peeping sideways in half-reassured terror, as a mighty griffin with batlike wings, one of Leonardo's finest *inventions*, descends suddenly from the air to snatch up a lion wandering near them. But note in these, as that which especially belongs to art, the contour of the young man's hair, the poise of the slave's arm above his head, and the curves of the head of the child, following the little skull within, thin and fine as some sea-shell worn by the wind.

Take again another head, still more full of sentiment, but of a different kind, a little drawing in red chalk which every one remembers who has examined at all carefully the drawings by old masters at the Louvre. It is a face of doubtful sex, set in the shadow of its own hair, the cheek-line in high light against it, with something voluptuous and full in the eyelids and the lips. Another drawing might pass for the same face in childhood, with parched and feverish lips, but with much sweetness in the loose, short-waisted childish dress, with necklace and *bulla*, and in the daintily bound hair.

We might take the thread of suggestion which these two drawings offer, when thus set side by side, and, following it through the drawings at Florence, Venice, and Milan, construct a sort of series, illustrating better than anything else Leonardo's type of womanly beauty. Daughters of Herodias, with their fantastic head-dresses knotted and folded so strangely to leave the dainty oval of the face disengaged, they are not of the Christian family, or of Raffaelle's. They are the clairvoyants, through whom, as through delicate instruments, one becomes aware of the subtler forces of nature, and the modes of their action, all that is magnetic in it, all those finer conditions wherein material things rise to that subtlety of operation which constitutes them spiritual, where only the finer nerve and the keener touch can follow: it is as if in certain revealing instances we actually saw them at their work on human flesh. Nervous, electric, faint always with some inexplicable faintness, they seem to be subject to exceptional conditions, to feel powers at work in the common air unfelt by others, to become, as it were, receptacles of them, and pass

them on to us in a chain of secret influences.

But among the more youthful heads there is one at Florence which Love chooses for its own — the head of a young man, which may well be the likeness of Andrea Salaino, beloved of Leonardo for his curled and waving hair — *belli capelli ricci e inanellati* — and afterwards his favourite pupil and servant. Of all the interests in living men and women which may have filled his life at Milan, this attachment alone is recorded; and in return Salaino identified himself so entirely with Leonardo, that the picture of *Saint Anne*, in the Louvre, has been attributed to him. It illustrates Leonardo's usual choice of pupils, men of some natural charm of person or intercourse like Salaino, or men of birth and princely habits of life like Francesco Melzi — men with just enough genius to be capable of initiation into his secret, for the sake of which they were ready to efface their own individuality. Among them, retiring often to the villa of the Melzi at *Canonica al Vaprio*, he worked at his fugitive manuscripts and sketches, working for the present hour, and for a few only, perhaps chiefly for himself. Other artists

have been as careless of present or future applause, in self-forgetfulness, or because they set moral or political ends above the ends of art; but in him this solitary culture of beauty seems to have hung upon a kind of self-love, and a carelessness in the work of art of all but art itself. Out of the secret places of a unique temperament he brought strange blossoms and fruits hitherto unknown; and for him, the novel impression conveyed, the exquisite effect woven, counted as an end in itself — a perfect end.

And these pupils of his acquired his manner so thoroughly, that though the number of Leonardo's authentic works is very small indeed, there is a multitude of other men's pictures through which we undoubtedly see him, and come very near to his genius. Sometimes, as in the little picture of the *Madonna of the Balances*, in which, from the bosom of His mother, Christ weighs the pebbles of the brook against the sins of men, we have a hand, rough enough by contrast, working upon some fine hint or sketch of his. Sometimes, as in the subjects of the *Daughter of Herodias* and the *Head of John the Baptist*,

the lost originals have been re-echoed and varied upon again and again by Luini and others. At other times the original remains, but has been a mere theme or motive, a type of which the accessories might be modified or changed; and these variations have but brought out the more the purpose, or expression of the original. It is so with the so-called *Saint John the Baptist* of the Louvre — one of the few naked figures Leonardo painted — whose delicate brown flesh and woman's hair no one would go out into the wilderness to seek, and whose treacherous smile would have us understand something far beyond the outward gesture or circumstance. But the long, reedlike cross in the hand, which suggests Saint John the Baptist, becomes faint in a copy at the Ambrosian Library, and disappears altogether in another, in the *Palazzo Rosso* at Genoa. Returning from the last to the original, we are no longer surprised by Saint John's strange likeness to the *Bacchus* which hangs near it, which set Théophile Gautier thinking of Heine's notion of decayed gods, who, to maintain themselves, after the fall of paganism, took employment in the new religion.

We recognise one of those symbolical inventions in which the ostensible subject is used, not as matter for definite pictorial realisation, but as the starting-point of a train of sentiment, as subtle and vague as a piece of music. No one ever ruled over his subject more entirely than Leonardo, or bent it more dexterously to purely artistic ends. And so it comes to pass that though he handles sacred subjects continually, he is the most profane of painters; the given person or subject, Saint John in the Desert, or the Virgin on the knees of Saint Anne, is often merely the pretext for a kind of work which carries one quite out of the range of its conventional associations.

About the *Last Supper*, its decay and restorations, a whole literature has risen up, Goethe's pensive sketch of its sad fortunes being far the best. The death in childbirth of the Duchess Beatrice was followed in Ludovico by one of those paroxysms of religious feeling which in him were constitutional. The low, gloomy Dominican church of *Saint Mary of the Graces* had been the favourite shrine of Beatrice. She had spent her last days there, full of sinister

presentiments; at last it had been almost necessary to remove her from it by force; and now it was here that mass was said a hundred times a day for her repose. On the damp wall of the refectory, oozing with mineral salts, Leonardo painted the *Last Supper*. A hundred anecdotes were told about it, his retouchings and delays. They show him refusing to work except at the moment of invention, scornful of whoever thought that art was a work of mere industry and rule, often coming the whole length of Milan to give a single touch. He painted it, not in fresco, where all must be *impromptu*, but in oils, the new method which he had been one of the first to welcome, because it allowed of so many after-thoughts, so refined a working out of perfection. It turned out that on a plastered wall no process could have been less durable. Within fifty years it had fallen into decay. And now we have to turn back to Leonardo's own studies, above all to one drawing of the central head at the *Brera*, which, in a union of tenderness and severity in the face-lines, reminds one of the monumental work of Mino da Fiesole, to trace it as it was.

It was another effort to lift a given subject out of the range of its conventional associations. Strange, after all the misrepresentations of the middle age, was the effort to see it, not as the pale Host of the altar, but as one taking leave of his friends. Five years afterwards the young Raffaelle, at Florence, painted it with sweet and solemn effect in the refectory of Saint Onofrio; but still with all the mystical unreality of the school of Perugino. Vasari pretends that the central head was never finished; but finished or unfinished, or owing part of its effect to a mellowing decay, this central head does but consummate the sentiment of the whole company — ghosts through which you see the wall, faint as the shadows of the leaves upon the wall on autumn afternoons: this figure is but the faintest, most spectral of them all. It is the image of what the history it symbolises has more and more become for the world, paler and paler as it recedes into the distance. Criticism came with its appeal from mystical unrealities to originals, and restored no lifelike reality but these transparent shadows, spirits which have not flesh and bones.

The *Last Supper* was finished in 1497; in 1498 the French entered Milan, and whether or not the Gascon bowmen used it as a mark for their arrows, the model of Francesco Sforza certainly did not survive. What, in that age, such work was capable of being — of what nobility, amid what racy truthfulness to fact — we may judge from the bronze statue of Bartolomeo Colleoni on horseback, modelled by Leonardo's master, Verrocchio (he died of grief, it was said, because, the mould accidentally failing, he was unable himself to complete it), still standing in the *piazza* of Saint John and Saint Paul at Venice. Some traces of the thing may remain in certain of Leonardo's drawings, and also, perhaps, by a singular circumstance, in a far-off town of France. For Ludovico became a prisoner, and ended his days at Loches in Touraine; — allowed at last, it is said, to breathe fresher air for awhile in one of the rooms of a high tower there, after many years of captivity in the dungeons below, where all seems sick with barbarous feudal memories, and where his prison is still shown, its walls covered with strange painted arabesques, ascribed by

tradition to his hand, amused a little, in this way, through the tedious years: — vast helmets and faces and pieces of armour, among which, in great letters, the motto *Infelix Sum* is woven in and out, and in which, perhaps, it is not too fanciful to see the fruit of a wistful after-dreaming over all those experiments with Leonardo on the armed figure of the great duke, that had occupied the two so often during the days of his good fortune at Milan.

The remaining years of Leonardo's life are more or less years of wandering. From his brilliant life at court he had saved nothing, and he returned to Florence a poor man. Perhaps necessity kept his spirit excited: the next four years are one prolonged rapture or ecstasy of invention. He painted the pictures of the Louvre, his most authentic works, which came there straight from the cabinet of Francis the First, at Fontainebleau. One picture of his, the *Saint Anne* — not the *Saint Anne* of the Louvre, but a mere cartoon, now in London — revived for a moment a sort of appreciation more common in an earlier time, when good pictures had still seemed miraculous;

and for two days a crowd of people of all qualities passed in naïve excitement through the chamber where it hung, and gave Leonardo a taste of Cimabue's triumph. But his work was less with the saints than with the living women of Florence; for he lived still in the polished society that he loved, and in the houses of Florence, left perhaps a little subject to light thoughts by the death of Savonarola — the latest gossip (1869) is of an undraped Monna Lisa, found in some out-of-the-way corner of the late *Orleans* collection — he saw Ginevra di Benci, and Lisa, the young third wife of Francesco del Giocondo. As we have seen him using incidents of sacred story, not for their own sake, or as mere subjects for pictorial realisation, but as a symbolical language for fancies all his own, so now he found a vent for his thoughts in taking one of these languid women, and raising her, as Leda or Pomona, Modesty or Vanity, to the seventh heaven of symbolical expression.

La Gioconda is, in the truest sense, Leonardo's masterpiece, the revealing instance of his mode of thought and work. In suggestiveness, only the *Melancholia* of

Dürer is comparable to it; and no crude symbolism disturbs the effect of its subdued and graceful mystery. We all know the face and hands of the figure, set in its marble chair, in that cirque of fantastic rocks, as in some faint light under sea. Perhaps of all ancient pictures time has chilled it least.[1] As often happens with works in which invention seems to reach its limit, there is an element in it given to, not invented by, the master. In that inestimable folio of drawings, once in the possession of Vasari, were certain designs by Verrocchio, faces of such impressive beauty that Leonardo in his boyhood copied them many times. It is hard not to connect with these designs of the elder, by-past master, as with its germinal principle, the unfathomable smile, always with a touch of something sinister in it, which plays over all Leonardo's work. Besides, the picture is a portrait. From childhood we see this image defining itself on the fabric of his dreams; and but for express historical testimony, we might

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1 Yet for Vasari there was some further magic of crimson in the lips and cheeks, lost for us.

fancy that this was but his ideal lady, embodied and beheld at last. What was the relationship of a living Florentine to this creature of his thought? By means of what strange affinities had the person and the dream grown up thus apart, and yet so closely together? Present from the first incorporeally in Leonardo's thought, dimly traced in the designs of Verrocchio, she is found present at last in *Il Giocondo's* house. That there is much of mere portraiture in the picture is attested by the legend that by artificial means, the presence of mimes and flute-players, that subtle expression was protracted on the face. Again, was it in four years and by renewed labour never really completed, or in four months and as by stroke of magic, that the image was projected?

The presence that thus rose so strangely beside the waters, is expressive of what in the ways of a thousand years men had come to desire. Hers is the head upon which all "the ends of the world are come," and the eyelids are a little weary. It is a beauty wrought out from within upon the flesh, the deposit, little cell by cell, of strange thoughts

and fantastic reveries and exquisite passions. Set it for a moment beside one of those white Greek goddesses or beautiful women of antiquity, and how would they be troubled by this beauty, into which the soul with all its maladies has passed! All the thoughts and experience of the world have etched and moulded there, in that which they have of power to refine and make expressive the outward form, the animalism of Greece, the lust of Rome, the reverie of the middle age with its spiritual ambition and imaginative loves, the return of the Pagan world, the sins of the Borgias. She is older than the rocks among which she sits; like the vampire, she has been dead many times, and learned the secrets of the grave; and has been a diver in deep seas, and keeps their fallen day about her; and trafficked for strange webs with Eastern merchants: and, as Leda, was the mother of Helen of Troy, and, as Saint Anne, the mother of Mary; and all this has been to her but as the sound of lyres and flutes, and lives only in the delicacy with which it has moulded the changing lineaments, and tinged the eyelids and the hands. The fancy of a perpetual

life, sweeping together ten thousand experiences, is an old one; and modern thought has conceived the idea of humanity as wrought upon by, and summing up in itself, all modes of thought and life. Certainly Lady Lisa might stand as the embodiment of the old fancy, the symbol of the modern idea.

During these years at Florence Leonardo's history is the history of his art; he himself is lost in the bright cloud of it. The outward history begins again in 1502, with a wild journey through central Italy, which he makes as the chief engineer of Cæsar Borgia. The biographer, putting together the stray jottings of his manuscripts, may follow him through every day of it, up the strange tower of Siena, which looks towards Rome, elastic like a bent bow, down to the seashore at Piombino, each place appearing as fitfully as in a fever dream.

One other great work was left for him to do, a work all trace of which soon vanished, *The Battle of the Standard*, in which he had Michelangelo for his rival. The citizens of Florence, desiring to decorate the walls of the great council-chamber, had offered the

work for competition, and any subject might be chosen from the Florentine wars of the fifteenth century. Michelangelo chose for his cartoon an incident of the war with Pisa, in which the Florentine soldiers, bathing in the Arno, are surprised by the sound of trumpets, and run to arms. His design has reached us only in an old engraving, which perhaps helps us less than what we remember of the background of his *Holy Family* in the *Uffizii* to imagine in what superhuman form, such as might have beguiled the heart of an earlier world, those figures may have risen from the water. Leonardo chose an incident from the battle of Anghiari, in which two parties of soldiers fight for a standard. Like Michelangelo's, his cartoon is lost, and has come to us only in sketches, and in a fragment of Rubens. Through the accounts given we may discern some lust of terrible things in it, so that even the horses tore each other with their teeth; and yet one fragment of it, in a drawing of his at Florence, is far different—a waving field of lovely armour, the chased edgings running like lines of sunlight from side to side. Michelangelo was twenty-seven years old;

Leonardo more than fifty; and Raffaelle, then nineteen years old, visiting Florence for the first time, came and watched them as they worked.

We catch a glimpse of him again, at Rome in 1514, surrounded by his mirrors and vials and furnaces, making strange toys that seemed alive of wax and quicksilver. The hesitation which had haunted him all through life, and made him like one under a spell, was upon him now with double force. No one had ever carried political indifferentism farther; it had always been his philosophy to "fly before the storm"; he is for the Sforzas, or against them, as the tide of their fortune turns. Yet now in the political society of Rome, he came to be suspected of concealed French sympathies. It paralysed him to find himself among enemies; and he turned wholly to France, which had long courted him.

France was about to become an Italy more Italian than Italy itself. Francis the First, like Lewis the Twelfth before him, was attracted by the *finesse* of Leonardo's work; *La Gioconda* was already in his cabinet, and he offered Leonardo the little *Château de*

Clou, with its vineyards and meadows, in the pleasant valley of the Masse, just outside the walls of the town of Amboise, where, especially in the hunting season, the court then frequently resided. *A Monsieur Lyonard, peinteur du Roy pour Amboyse*—so the letter of Francis the First is headed. It opens a prospect, one of the most interesting in the history of art, where, under a strange mixture of lights, Italian art dies away as a French exotic.

Two questions remain, after much busy antiquarianism, concerning Leonardo's death—the question of the precise form of his religion, and the question whether Francis the First was present at the time. They are of about equally little importance in the estimate of Leonardo's genius. The directions in his will about the thirty masses and the great candles for the church of Saint Florentin are things of course, their real purpose being immediate and practical; and on no theory of religion could these hurried offices be of much consequence. We forget them in speculating how one who had been always so desirous of beauty, but desired it always in such definite and precise forms,

as hands or flowers or hair, looked forward now into the vague land, and experienced the last curiosity.

1869.

The Bibelot

A LITTLE *book in delicate straw coloured buckram, red leather back label stamped with severely simple gold lettering —such is the outward form and semblance of* Corn and Poppies, *from which we have here chosen twelve poems of very diverse and very remarkable beauty.*[1]

Turning to the criticism of ten years ago one is not surprised to find the Athenæum *at its familiar worst; or Mr. Richard Le Gallienne (in the* Academy) *praising with a no less familiar lack of judgment things really calling for judicious silence. Not for one single critical instant can* To the Sea *by Mr. Monkhouse be profitably compared with Leigh Hunt's well-known sonnet written in conjunction with Shelley and Keats; similarly, the* vers de société *and 'occasional pieces' are simply good derivative work—that and nothing more.*

But passing from this sort of thing consider the majestic melancholy sweep of

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1 *What was said in* The Bibelot *for August, 1898, continues to be a fact: "Mr. Monkhouse still remains a poet of unsuspected excellence. His* Corn and Poppies, *(350 copies, London, 1890) appears in no later edition."*

A Dead March: *it has but one proper parallel, Browning's* A Toccata of Galuppi's. *Read* The Spectrum, The Rebel; *read* Ad Poetas. *The man who wrote* Ad Poetas *could well have written* Lachrymae Musarum *which last to some of us stands highest in the order of William Watson's elegiac verse. And beside the* Little Boy Blue *of Eugene Field might be placed* A Bristol Figure; *while* De Libris *is in our Western singer's happiest mood. But a true lyric never yet required apology or footnotes. Our foreword is based upon this self-evident assumption.*

FOR APRIL:

GOLDEN WINGS:
A Tale by
WILLIAM MORRIS.

LYRICS

By

COSMO MONKHOUSE.

A DEAD MARCH.

PLAY me a march lowtoned and slow — a
march for a silent tread,
Fit for the wandering feet of one who dreams
of the silent dead,
Lonely, between the bones below and the
souls that are overhead.

Here for awhile they smiled and sang, alive
in the interspace,
Here with the grass beneath the foot, and
the stars above the face,
Now are their feet beneath the grass, and
whither has flown their grace?

Who shall assure us whence they come or
tell us the way they go?
Verily, life with them was joy, and now they
have left us, woe,
Once they were not, and now they are not,
and this is the sum we know.

Orderly range the seasons due, and orderly
roll the stars.
How shall we deem the soldier brave who
frets of his wounds and scars?
Are we as senseless brutes that we should
dash at the well-seen bars?

No, we are here, with feet unfixed, but ever
as if with lead
Drawn from the orbs which shine above to
the orb on which we tread,
Down to the dust from which we came and
with which we shall mingle dead.

No, we are here to wait, and work, and strain
our banished eyes,
Weary and sick of soil and toil, and hungry
and fain for skies
Far from the reach of wingless men and not
to be scaled with cries.

No, we are here to bend our necks to the
yoke of tyrant Time.
Welcoming all the gifts he gives us — glories
of youth and prime,
Patiently watching them all depart as our
heads grow white as rime.

Why do we mourn the days that go — for the
same sun shines each day,
Ever a spring her primrose hath, and ever a
May her may —
Sweet as the rose that died last year, is the
rose that is born to-day.

Do we not too return, we men, as ever the
round earth whirls?

Never a head is dimmed with gray but
another is sunned with curls,
She was a girl and he was a boy, but yet
there are boys and girls.

Ah, but alas for the smile of smiles that
never but one face wore.
Ah for the voice that has flown away like a
bird to an unseen shore.
Ah for the face — the flower of flowers —
that blossoms on earth no more.

THE SPECTRUM.

How many colours here do we see set,
Like rings upon God's finger? Some say three,
Some four, some six, some seven. All agree
To left of red, to right of violet,
Waits darkness deep as night and black as jet.
And so we know what Noah saw we see
Nor less nor more — of God's emblazonry
A shred — a sign of glory known not yet.
If red can glide to yellow, green to blue,
What joys may yet await our wider eyes
When we rewake upon a wider shore!
What deep pulsations exquisite and new:
What keener, swifter, raptures may surprise
Men born to see the rainbow and no more!

IN ARCADY.

In yon hollow Damon lies,
Lost in slumber deep.
(Hush, hush, ye shepherd girls
Break not his sleep.)

Phyllis passes tiptoe by;
Whither is she hieing?
(Peep, peep, ye shepherd girls
He for her is dying.)

Now she pauses, now she bends,
Ah, she kissed him purely.
(Look away, ye shepherd girls
Frown, frown demurely.)

See he clips her in his arms,
She who was the proudest.
(Laugh, laugh, ye shepherd girls,
Laugh, laugh your loudest.)

AES TRIPLEX.

A MAN superb, enriched with wealth and praise,
On men's misfortunes looked down from a height:
He held the order of the world was right,
And men might thank themselves for evil days.
But fortune, tired of his complacent ways,
Sent all his ships to bottom in one night;
And he awoke the morn in evil plight —
Bankrupt, and mark of much sinister gaze.
On which one came to him and said: "My friend,
Behold thy troubles thick upon thee come,
Who scarcely pity had for lame or halt!
Dost thou not see the scales of Justice bend,
And that the world is ruled by rule of thumb?"
To which he answered "No, 'twas my own fault!"

LIFE AND DEATH.

FROM morn to eve they wrestled — Life and Death.
At first it seemed to me that they in mirth
Contended, or as foes of equal worth,
So firm their feet, so undisturbed their breath;
But when the sharp red sun cut through its sheath
Of western clouds, I saw the brown arms' girth
Tighten, and bear that radiant form to earth;
And suddenly both fell upon the heath.
And then the marvel came — for when I fled
To where those great antagonists down fell,
I could not find the body that I sought,
And when and where it went I could not tell;
One only form was left of those who fought,
The long dark form of Death, and it was dead.

THE TRUE LOVER.

To him whose love flows on — beyond the shore
Of life, whose days are full of lonelinesses,
But who within the heart's remote recesses
Hears the bright laughter of the living world, —
To him Delight is as a ringlet curled
Around his finger for a little space
That, slipping, leaves him thinking of a face
Which laughed and wept, but now shall weep no more.

To him there is no treason in new love
That wrongs not any old, no faith in giving
To wantless dead the crumbs that feed the living,
Devotion none in watching wakeless sleep.
For him his friends descend not to the deep
Of sunless graves, but with no clouded face
Remain to cheer the remnant of his race
Between the green earth and the stars above.

To him indeed the world is as "a stage"
From which there is no exit for the players;
The scene is crowned with the dear delayers
Whose part is over, but they do not go.
But still he lives his part of joy or woe
Unlearn'd, unacted, as the Master-will
Dictates, whose many-plotted dramas fill
The theatre of life from age to age.

To him each year a benefactor seems
That leaves him stores of happiness and sorrow:
He neither hugs to-day nor fears to-morrow;
He welcomes winter as he welcomes spring;
For he has shaken hands with suffering
And seen the wings of joy, nor does he scorn
The gift of any day however born,
In mist of tears or in the light of dreams.

To him the new is dearer for the old,
To him the old for each new day is dearer,
His unforgotten youth seems ever nearer,
As though the ends of life were made to meet.
To him the mingled cup of bitter-sweet
Is grown familiar as his daily bread,
And in the awful dark he rests his head
With a hushed confidence that is not bold.

To him Death seems less terrible than sleep,
For he has seen the happiness of dying,
And no bad dreams disturb the tranquil lying
Of those who bear green grass above the breast;
And if there be a waking after rest
He shall not wake alone, but he shall be
With all he loves and all he longs to see,
And if he shall not wake — he shall not weep.

DE LIBRIS.

TRUE there are books and books. There's Gray,
For instance, and there's Bacon;
There's Longfellow, and Monstrelet,
And also Colton's "Lacon,"
With "Laws of Whist" and those of Libel,
And Euclid, and the Mormon Bible.

And some are dear as friends, and some
We keep because we need them;
And some we ward from worm and thumb,
And love too well to read them.
My own are poor, and mostly new,
But I've an Elzevir or two.

That as a gift is prized, the next
For trouble in the finding,
This Aldine for its early text,
That Plantin for the binding;
This sorry Herrick hides a flower,
The record of one perfect hour.

But whether it be worth or looks
We gently love or strongly,
Such virtue doth reside in books
We scarce can love them wrongly;
To sages an eternal school,
A hobby harmless to the fool.

Nor altogether fool is he
Who orders, free from doubt,
Those books which "no good library
Should ever be without,"
And blandly locks the well-glazed door
On tomes that issue never more.

Less may we scorn his cases grand,
Where safely, surely, linger
Fair virgin fields of type, unscanned
And innocent of finger.
There rest, preserved from dust accurst,
The first editions — and the worst.

And least of all should we that write
With easy jest deride them,
Who hope to leave when "lost to sight"
The best of us inside them.
Dear shrines! where many a scribbler's name
Has lasted — longer than his fame.

WITH A DRAWING BY BOUCHER.

(TO N. G.)

SEE what a little thing
This that I offer you,
Just a few grains of dust
Staining a faded leaf.
Will you not welcome it
Yet—and be kind to it,
Smile on it once, and think
"Boucher saw, Boucher drew"?

Just a mere wanderer,
Footsore and weary-souled
All on a summer's day,
Called from a dusty road.
"Rest ye," said rosy lips,
"Rest ye and pipe to us,
Light are our hearts and feet."

Ah! They are grains of dust,
Piper and lady fair,
Formless, unhumanised,
Painter and company.
This is their messenger.
Is it not mightier?
Keeping what grace it had,
Bearing in spite of death,

Man and the thought of man,
Safe through the centuries?

Yet — 'tis a little thing,
Scarcely a glance's worth.
Chiefly I value its
Rare opportunity.
One thought to send to you,
Not of unkindliness.

AD POETAS.

ALTHOUGH no more is heard
The sweet shrill fluting of the shepherd's fife
Turning to Song the wonder of the morn,
And joys of life and hopes of joys unborn
With doubt and toil and strife are overcast,
Is all the music buried with the past?
Are we left so forlorn
That there is none to sing us songs of life?

Awake all ye that hear!
Ye of the undimmed ear,
Pure as a child's who wonders at a shell,
Awake and tell!
Rejoice and teach men to rejoice
In their dear Mother's voice!
For little can they hear
Above the shouts that rise around the throne
Of Mammon, through the roar
Of wars ignoble, and the overpour
Of wordy torrents, and the cries of Fear
From poor weak souls bewildered with the strife
Of all the rival guides of heaven and hell.
Awake ye then and swell
The tuneful air with songs of Love and Life!

Sing to the crowd ye few,
To those for whom no chant

Pierces the purple silence round the stars,
To whom the spring's fair green,
The flowerets fresh,
The heaven's bright blue,
Tell nothing new,
To whom, on breezes borne
No music from the world unseen
Makes palpitate the god within the flesh.
Smite the dull souls forlorn
And make them resonant,
Pierce through their prison-bars
Through which the Sun in Heaven itself
Shines — but a lamp upon a shelf.

Sing then all ye that hear,
Nor only hear but feel —
Through whose sonorous being pass as fire
The fierce vibrations of the sun-god's lyre,
To whom the fairest words
Come blended with the chords,
To whom breaks never a day
When no sweet whispers steal
From bird and cloud and spray
To your most fortunate ear.
Sing though all other ears be dull,
Sing though all other hearts be hard,
And your songs beautiful
Your one reward.

Be ye content with this,
Your poet's dower,
That though the fates be stern,
Denying health, and ease, and fame, and power,
They cannot check the soul that dares aspire,
Or teach your hearts heroic not to burn,
Or throb contented with a tame desire;
And this shall be your bliss,—
That, though your feet may bleed and hearts be wrung,
And though around your honoured heads be hung
No well-deserved bays,
Not you with unmelodious souls unstrung
Shall live unechoing days.

A BRISTOL FIGURE.

Raised on a little carven corner-shelf,
Half-shaded by a curtain, stood a figure,
Too small to have been left there by itself,
But that it seemed to claim a right to space—
This baby-gentleman with shirt of lace
And small fore-finger curving round a trigger.

A trigger only—for the dainty hand
Had lost the rest of what was once a pistol;
But still remained the spirit of command—
The dandy grace heroic of the boy—
That made me think of Dresden and of Troy,
Although I recognised the paste as "Bristol."

So—more from habit than desire to know—
Down from its lonely stage I softly whisk it,
And turn it up—and, sure enough, below—
A triangle enclosing two crossed swords,
Impressed, the mark which clearest proof affords
The piece is nothing else than Bristol biscuit.

And then I hear a stricken cry of "O
Don't touch—" but ere the sentence is completed,
A slender lady with a face of woe
Has gently urged the figure from my hand,
Replaced it carefully upon the stand,
And bid me in a chilly voice be seated.

"Your business, Sir," she says, and I begin
To tell this victim of the china-fashion
That I have come in search of next-of-kin
To some one who has died without a will;
And soon the lace upon her breast is still,
And gone all symptoms of her recent passion.

I scarce could fancy that a moment since,
Her manner and her face had been alarming;
Thoughtful enough a sceptic to convince
A woman may be wise as well as fair,
There yet was such a frankness in her air,—
She might be passionate, but she was charming.

And as I rose I said "I thank you much
For all your courtesy to me a stranger,
And grieve that I was rude enough to touch
Your Bristol boy. I have a piece or two
Worthy of such a connoisseur as you,
And know the shock of seeing them in danger.

"Though injured, it is singularly fine,
And if you'll trust in one who has offended,
I know a man, a genius in his line,
Whom I and just a very few employ;
He will restore for you your little boy
So that you'll scarcely tell he has been mended."

"Ah, no, forgive me — but for me its charm
(Her face grew strangely solemn as she spoke it)

Is only in the little broken arm.
Restore my boy! — you knew not what you said —
I had a little son once who is dead,
And I was angry with him when he broke it."

A SONG OF THE SEASONS.

SING a song of Spring-time,
The world is going round,
Blown by the south wind:
Listen to its sound.
"Gurgle" goes the mill-wheel,
"Cluck" clucks the hen;
And it's O for a pretty girl
To kiss in the glen.

Sing a song of Summer,
The world is nearly still,
The mill-pool has gone to sleep,
And so has the mill.
Shall we go a-sailing
Or shall we take a ride,
Or dream the afternoon away
Here, side by side?

Sing a song of Autumn,
The world is going back;
They glean in the corn-field
And stamp on the stack.
Our boy, Charlie,
Tall, strong, and light:
He shoots all the day
And dances all night.

Sing a song of Winter,
The world stops dead;
Under snowy coverlid
Flowers lie a-bed.
There's hunting for the young ones
And wine for the old,
And a sexton in the churchyard
Digging in the cold.

THE REBEL.

(FROM THE FRENCH OF BAUDELAIRE.)

An angel swoops like eagle on his prey,
Grips by the hair the unbelieving wight,
And furious cries, "O scorner of the right,
'Tis I, thine Angel good, who speak. Obey!
Know, thou shalt love without the least distaste
The poor, the base, the crooked, and the dull;
So shall the pageant of thy Lord be graced
With banners by thy love made beautiful.
This is God's love — see that thy soul be fired
With its pure flame or e'er the heart grow tired,
And thou shalt know the bliss that lasts for aye."
Ah! with what ruthless love that Angel grand
Tortures and racks the wretch with giant hand!
— But still he answers, "Never, till I die."

The Bibelot

GOLDEN WINGS—*a title afterwards bestowed upon the poem which in* The Defence of Guenevere *is surely one of the most beautiful in that beautiful book—was the final contribution of William Morris to* The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine *for 1856.*

According to Mr. Forman, "someone played an unwarrantable trick" upon the youthful romancer. "The third paragraph of his story should open with the words—" [as here given]; "but the wag whom I am unable to specify substituted 'an old lady' for 'a lady.'" [1] *The same pleasantry served its mirthful mission in at least one passage further on.*[2]

Since our reprint of Gertha's Lovers[3] *the hope we then expressed that a finer critical appreciation of these tales would be made by Mr. F. W. Mackail in his forthcoming* Life *of the poet has found adequate*

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1 The Books of William Morris *by H. Buxton Forman (London, 1897), p. 33.*

2 *"Old women" for "women" see page 117, line 20, of the present number.*

3 *The Bibelot, Vol. V, pp. 1-102.*

fulfillment.[4] *To those who are in accord with our belief that here was "a body of inedited prose not to be easily ignored or lightly set aside," the slightest token from the hand of the master bears the impress of his genius. And to such of us* Golden Wings *will come—a little dimmed by the years, for thus all precious things are dimmed, but still of very lasting loveliness; still resonant with echoes from*

Forgotten fields of fight and faëry,
Of loves and hates deceasèd long ago.

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4 *"Their author in later years thought, or seemed to think, lightly of them, calling them crude (as they are) and very young (as they are). 'But they are, nevertheless, comparable in quality to Keats' "Endymion": as rich in imagination, as irregularly gorgeous in language, as full in every vein and fibre of the sweet juices and ferment of the spring."* The Life of William Morris *by J. W. Mackail, 2 vols., octavo, (London, 1899), Vol. I, p. 99.*

FOR MAY:
A SONG TO DAVID
By
CHRISTOPHER SMART

GOLDEN WINGS:
A Tale by
WILLIAM MORRIS.

GOLDEN WINGS.

"Lyf lythes to nee,
Twa wordes or three,
Of one who was fair and free,
And fele in his fight."

Sir Percival.

I SUPPOSE my birth was somewhat after the birth of Sir Percival of Galles, for I never saw my father, and my mother brought me up quaintly; not like a poor man's son, though, indeed, we had little money, and lived in a lone place: it was on a bit of waste land near a river; moist, and without trees; on the drier parts of it folks had built cottages — see, I can count them on my fingers — six cottages, of which ours was one.

Likewise, there was a little chapel, with a yew tree and graves in the church-yard — graves — yes, a great many graves, more than in the yards of many Minsters I have seen, because people fought a battle once near us, and buried many bodies in deep pits, to the east of the chapel; but this was before I was born.

I have talked to old knights since who fought in that battle, and who told me that it was all about a lady that they fought;

indeed, this lady, who was a queen, was afterwards, by her own wish, buried in the aforesaid chapel in a most fair tomb; her image was of latoun gilt, and with a colour on it; her hands and face were of silver, and her hair, gilded and most curiously wrought, flowed down from her head over the marble.

It was a strange thing to see that gold and brass and marble inside that rough chapel which stood on the marshy common, near the river.

Now, every St. Peter's day, when the sun was at its hottest, in the midsummer noontide, my mother (though at other times she only wore such clothes as the folk about us) would dress herself most richly, and shut the shutters against all the windows, and light great candles, and sit as though she were a queen, till the evening: sitting and working at a frame, and singing as she worked.

And what she worked at was two wings, wrought in gold, on a blue ground.

And as for what she sung, I could never understand it, though I know now it was not in Latin.

And she used to charge me straightly never to let any man into the house on St.

Peter's day; therefore, I and our dog, which was a great old bloodhound, always kept the door together.

But one St. Peter's day, when I was nearly twenty, I sat in the house watching the door with the bloodhound, and I was sleepy, because of the shut-up heat and my mother's singing, so I began to nod, and at last, though the dog often shook me by the hair to keep me awake, went fast asleep, and began to dream a foolish dream without hearing, as men sometimes do: for I thought that my mother and I were walking to mass through the snow on a Christmas day, but my mother carried a live goose in her hand, holding it by the neck, instead of her rosary, and that I went along by her side, not walking, but turning somersaults like a mountebank, my head never touching the ground; when we got to the chapel-door, the old priest met us, and said to my mother, "Why dame alive, your head is turned green! Ah! never mind, I will go and say mass, but don't let little Mary there go," and he pointed to the goose, and went.

Then mass begun, but in the midst of it, the priest said out loud, "Oh I forgot," and

turning round to us began to wag his grey head and white beard, throwing his head right back, and sinking his chin on his breast alternately; and when we saw him do this, we presently began also to knock our heads against the wall, keeping time with him and with each other, till the priest said, "Peter! it's dragon-time now," whereat the roof flew off, and a great yellow dragon came down on the chapel-floor with a flop, and danced about clumsily, wriggling his fat tail, and saying to a sort of tune, "O the Devil, the Devil, the Devil, O the Devil," so I went up to him, and put my hand on his breast, meaning to slay him, and so awoke, and found myself standing up with my hand on the breast of an armed knight; the door lay flat on the ground, and under it lay Hector, our dog, whining and dying.

For eight hours I had been asleep; on awaking, the blood rushed up into my face, I heard my mother's low mysterious song behind me, and knew not what harm might happen to her and me, if that knight's coming made her cease in it; so I struck him with my left hand, where his face was bare under his mail-coif, and getting my sword in my

right, drove its point under his hawberk, so that it came out behind, and he fell, turned over on his face, and died.

Then, because my mother still went on working and singing, I said no word, but let him lie there, and put the door up again, and found Hector dead.

I then sat down again and polished my sword with a piece of leather after I had wiped the blood from it; and in an hour my mother arose from her work, and raising me from where I was sitting, kissed my brow, saying, "Well done, Lionel, you have slain your greatest foe, and now the people will know you for what you are before you die — Ah God! though not before *I* die."

So I said, "Who is he, mother? he seems to be some Lord; am I a Lord then?"

"A King, if the people will but know it," she said.

Then she knelt down by the dead body, turned it round again, so that it lay face uppermost, as before, then said:

"And so it has all come to this, has it? To think that you should run on my son's sword-point at last, after all the wrong you have done me and mine; now must I work

carefully, least when you are dead you should still do me harm, for that you are a King — Lionel!"

"Yea, Mother."

"Come here and see; this is what I have wrought these many Peter's days by day, and often other times by night."

"It is a surcoat, Mother; for me?"

"Yea, but take a spade, and come into the wood."

So we went, and my mother gazed about her for a while as if she were looking for something, but then suddenly went forward with her eyes on the ground, and she said to me:

"Is it not strange, that I who know the very place I am going to take you to, as well as our own garden, should have a sudden fear come over me that I should not find it after all; though for these nineteen years I have watched the trees change and change all about it — ah! here, stop now."

We stopped before a great oak; a beech tree was behind us — she said, "Dig, Lionel, hereabouts."

So I dug and for an hour found nothing but beech roots, while my mother seemed as

if she were going mad, sometimes running about muttering to herself, sometimes stooping into the hole and howling, sometimes throwing herself on the grass and twisting her hands together above her head; she went once down the hill to a pool that had filled an old gravel pit, and came back dripping and with wild eyes; "I am too hot," she said, "far too hot this St. Peter's day."

Clink just then from my spade against iron; my mother screamed, and I dug with all my might for another hour, and then beheld a chest of heavy wood bound with iron ready to be heaved out of the hole; "Now Lionel weigh it out — hard for your life!"

And with some trouble I got the chest out; she gave me a key, I unlocked the chest, and took out another wrapped in lead, which also I unlocked with a silver key that my mother gave me, and behold therein lay armour — mail for the whole body, made of very small rings wrought most wonderfully, for every ring was fashioned like a serpent, and though they were so small yet could you see their scales and their eyes, and of some even the forked tongue was on it, and

lay on the rivet, and the rings were gilded here and there into patterns and flowers so that the gleam of it was most glorious.— And the mail-coif was all gilded and had red and blue stones at the rivets; and the tilting helms (inside which the mail lay when I saw it first) was gilded also, and had flowers pricked out on it; and the chain of it was silver, and the crest was two gold wings. And there was a shield of blue set with red stones, which had two gold wings for a cognizance; and the hilt of the sword was gold, with angels wrought in green and blue all up it, and the eyes in their wings were of pearls and red stones, and the sheath was of silver with green flowers on it.

Now when I saw this armour and understood that my mother would have me put it on, and ride out without fear, leaving her alone, I cast myself down on the grass so that I might not see its beauty (for it made me mad), and strove to think; but what thoughts soever came to me were only of the things that would be, glory in the midst of ladies, battle-joy among knights, honour from all kings and princes and people— these things.

But my mother wept softly above me, till I arose with a great shudder of delight and drew the edges of the hawberk over my cheek, I liked so to feel the rings slipping, slipping, till they fell off altogether; then I said:

"O Lord God that made the world, if I might only die in this armour!"

Then my mother helped me to put it on, and I felt strange and new in it, and yet I had neither lance nor horse.

So when we reached the cottage again she said: "See now, Lionel, you must take this knight's horse and his lance, and ride away, or else the people will come here to kill another king; and when you are gone, you will never see me any more in life."

I wept thereat, but she said:

"Nay, but see here."

And taking the dead knight's lance from among the garden lilies, she rent from it the pennon (which had a sword on a red ground for bearing), and cast it carelessly on the ground, then she bound about it a pennon with my bearing, gold wings on a blue ground; she bid me bear the Knight's body, all armed as he was, to put on him his helm and lay him on the floor at her bed's foot,

also to break his sword and cast it on our hearth-stone; all which things I did.

Afterwards she put the surcoat on me, and then lying down in her gorgeous raiment on her bed, she spread her arms out in the form of a cross, shut her eyes, and said:

"Kiss me, Lionel, for I am tired."

And after I had kissed her she died.

And I mounted my dead foe's horse and rode away; neither did I ever know what wrong that was which he had done me, not while I was in the body at least.

And do not blame me for not burying my mother; I left her there because, though she did not say so to me, yet I knew the thoughts of her heart, and that the thing she had wished so earnestly for these years, and years, and years, had been but to lie dead with him lying dead close to her.

So I rode all that night for I could not stop, because of the thoughts that were in me, and, stopping at this place and that, in three days came to the city.

And there the King held his court with great pomp.

And so I went to the palace, and asked to see the King; whereupon they brought me

into the great hall where he was with all his knights, and my heart swelled within me to think that I too was a King.

So I prayed him to make me a knight, and he spake graciously and asked me my name; so when I had told it him, and said that I was a king's son, he pondered, not knowing what to do, for I could not tell him whose son I was.

Whereupon one of the knights came near me and shaded his eyes with his hand as one does in a bright sun, meaning to mock at me for my shining armour, and he drew nearer and nearer till his long stiff beard just touched me, and then I smote him on the face, and he fell on the floor.

So the king being in a rage, roared out from the door, "Slay him!" but I put my shield before me and drew my sword, and the women drew together aside and whispered fearfully, and while some of the knights took spears and stood about me, others got their armour on.

And as we stood thus we heard a horn blow, and then an armed knight came into the hall and drew near to the King; and one of the maidens behind me, came and

laid her hand on my shoulder; so I turned and saw that she was very fair, and then I was glad, but she whispered to me:

"Sir Squire for a love I have for your face and gold armour, I will give you good counsel; go presently to the King and say to him: 'in the name of Alys des roses and Sir Guy le bon amant I pray you three boons,' — do this, and you will be alive, and a knight by to-morrow, otherwise I think hardly the one or the other."

"The Lord reward you damoyzel," I said. Then I saw that the King had left talking with that knight and was just going to stand up and say something out loud, so I went quickly and called out with a loud voice:

"O King Gilbert of the rose-land, I, Lionel of the golden wings, pray of you three boons in the name of Alys des roses and Sir Guy le bon amant."

Then the King gnashed his teeth because he had promised if ever his daughter Alys des roses came back safe again, he would on that day grant any three boons to the first man who asked them, even if he were his greatest foe. He said, "Well, then, take them, what are they?"

"First, my life; then, that you should make me a knight; and thirdly, that you should take me into your service."

He said, "I will do this, and moreover, I forgive you freely if you will be my true man."

Then we heard shouting arise through all the city because they were bringing the Lady Alys from the ship up to the palace, and the people came to the windows, and the houses were hung with cloths and banners of silk and gold, that swung down right from the eaves to the ground; likewise the bells all rang: and within a while they entered the palace, and the trumpets rang and men shouted, so that my head whirled; and they entered the hall, and the King went down from the dais to meet them.

Now a band of knights and of damoyzels went before and behind, and in the midst Sir Guy led the Lady Alys by the hand, and he was a most stately knight, strong and fair.

And I indeed noted the first band of knights and damoyzels well, and wondered at the noble presence of the knights, and was filled with joy when I beheld the maids, because of their great beauty; the second

band I did not see, for when they passed I was leaning back against the wall, wishing to die with my hands before my face.

But when I could see, she was hanging about her father's neck, weeping, and she never left him all that night, but held his hand in feast and dance, and even when I was made knight, while the king with his right hand laid his sword over my shoulder, she held his left hand and was close to me.

And the next day they held a grand tourney, that I might be proven; and I had never fought with knights before, yet I did not doubt. And Alys sat under a green canopy, that she might give the degree to the best knight, and by her sat the good knight Sir Guy, in a long robe, for he did not mean to joust that day; and indeed at first none but young knights jousted, for they thought that I should not do much.

But I, looking up to the green canopy, overthrew so many of them, that the elder knights began to arm, and I grew most joyful as I met them, and no man unhorsed me; and always I broke my spear fairly, or else overthrew my adversary.

Now that maiden who counselled me in

the hall, told me afterwards that as I fought, the Lady Alys held fast to the rail before her, and leaned forward and was most pale, never answering any word that any one might say to her, till the Knight Guy said to her in anger: "Alys! what ails you? you would have been glad enough to speak to me when King Wadrayns carried you off shrieking, or that other time when the chain went round about you, and the faggots began to smoke in the Brown City: do you not love me any longer? O Alys, Alys! just think a little, and do not break your faith with me; God hates nothing so much as this. Sweet, try to love me, even for your own sake! See, am I not kind to you?"

That maiden said that she turned round to him wonderingly, as if she had not caught his meaning, and that just for one second, then stretched out over the lists again.

Now till about this time I had made no cry as I jousted. But there came against me a very tall knight, on a great horse, and when we met our spears both shivered, and he howed with vexation, for he wished to slay me, being the brother of that knight I had struck down in the hall the day before.

And they say that when Alys heard his howl sounding faintly through the bars of his great helm, she trembled; but I know not, for I was stronger than that knight, and when we fought with swords, I struck him right out of his saddle, and near slew him with that stroke.

Whereupon I shouted "Alys," out loud, and she blushed red for pleasure, and Sir Guy took note of it, and rose up in a rage and ran down and armed.

Then presently I saw a great knight come riding in with three black chevrons on a gold shield: and so he began to ride at me, and at first we only broke both our spears, but then he drew his sword, and fought quite in another way to what the other knights had, so that I saw at once that I had no chance against him: nevertheless, for a long time he availed nothing, though he wounded me here and there, but at last drove his sword right through mine, through my shield and my helm, and I fell, and lay like one dead.

And thereat the King cried out to cease, and the degree was given to Sir Guy, because I had overthrown forty knights and he had overthrown me.

Then they told me, I was carried out of the lists and laid in a hostelry near the palace, and Guy went up to the pavilion where Alys was and she crowned him, both of them being very pale, for she doubted if I were slain, and he knew that she did not love him, thinking before that she did; for he was good and true, and had saved her life and honour, and she (poor maid!) wished to please her father, and strove to think that all was right.

But I was by no means slain, for the sword had only cleft my helm, and when I came to myself again I felt despair of all things, because I knew not that she loved me, for how should she, knowing nothing of me? likewise dust had been cast on my gold wings, and she saw it done.

Then I heard a great crying in the street, that sounded strangely in the quiet night, so I sent to ask what it might be: and there came presently into my chamber a man in gilded armour; he was an old man, and his hair and beard were gray, and behind him came six men armed, who carried a dead body of a young man between them, and I said, "What is it? who is he?" Then the

old man, whose head was heavy for grief, said: "Oh, sir! this is my son; for as we went yesterday with our merchandize some twenty miles from this fair town, we passed by a certain hold, and therefrom came a knight and men at arms, who when my son would have fought with them, overthrew him and bound him, and me and all our men they said they would slay if we did ought; so then they cut out my son's eyes, and cut off his hands, and then said, 'The Knight of High Gard takes these for tribute.' Therewithal they departed, taking with them my son's eyes and his hands on a platter; and when they were gone I would have followed them, and slain some of them at least, but my own people would not suffer me, and for grief and pain my son's heart burst, and he died, and behold I am here."

Then I thought I could win glory, and I was much rejoiced thereat, and said to the old man,

"Would you love to be revenged?"

But he set his teeth, and pulled at the skirt of his surcoat, as hardly for his passion he said, "Yes."

"Then," I said, "I will go and try to slay

this knight, if you will show me the way to La Haute Garde."

And he, taking my hand, said, "O glorious knight, let us go now!" And he did not ask who I was, or whether I was a good knight, but began to go down the stairs at once, so I put on my armour and followed him.

And we two set forth alone to La Haute Garde, for no man else dared follow us, and I rejoiced in thinking that while Guy was sitting at the King's table feasting, I was riding out to slay the King's enemies, for it never once seemed possible to me that I should be worsted.

It was getting light again by then we came in sight of High Gard; we wound up the hill on foot, for it was very steep; I blew at the gates a great blast which was even as though the stag should blow his own mort, or like the blast that Balen heard.

For in a very short while the gates opened and a great band of armed men, more than thirty I think, and a knight on horseback among them, who was armed in red, stood before us, and on one side of him was a serving man with a silver dish, on the other,

one with a butcher's cleaver, a knife, and pincers.

So when the knight saw us he said, "What, are you come to pay tribute in person, old man, and is this another fair son? Good sir, how is your lady?"

So I said grimly, being in a rage, "I have a will to slay you."

But I could scarce say so before the old merchant rushed at the red knight with a yell, who without moving slew his horse with an axe, and then the men at arms speared the old man, slaying him as one would an otter or a rat.

Afterwards they were going to set on me, but the red knight held them back, saying: "Nay, I am enough," and we spurred our horses.

As we met, I felt just as if some one had thrown a dull brown cloth over my eyes, and I felt the wretched spear-point slip off his helm; then I felt a great pain somewhere, that did not seem to be in my body, but in the world, or the sky, or something of that sort.

And I know not how long that pain seemed to last now, but I think years,

though really I grew well and sane again in a few weeks.

And when I woke, scarce knowing whether I was in the world or heaven or hell, I heard some one singing.

I tried to listen but could not, because I did not know where I was, and was thinking of that; I missed verse after verse of the song, this song, till at last I saw I must be in the King's palace.

There was a window by my bed, I looked out at it, and saw that I was high up; down in the street the people were going to and fro, and there was a knot of folks gathered about a minstrel, who sat on the edge of a fountain, with his head laid sideways on his shoulder, and nursing one leg on the other; he was singing only, having no instrument, and he sang the song I had tried to listen to, I heard some of it now:

"He was fair and free,
At every tourney
He wan the degree,
Sir Guy the good knight.

"He wan Alys the fair,
The King's own daughtere,
With all her gold hair,
That shone well bright.

"He saved a good knight,
Who also was wight,
And had wingès bright
On a blue shield.

"And he slew the Knight,
Of the High Gard in fight,
In red weed that was dight
In the open field."

I fell back in my bed and wept, for I was weak with my illness; to think of this! truly this man was a perfect knight, and deserved to win Alys. Ah! well! but was this the glory I was to have, and no one believed that I was a King's son.

And so I passed days and nights, thinking of my dishonour and misery, and my utter loneliness; no one cared for me; verily, I think, if any one had spoken to me lovingly, I should have fallen on his neck and died, while I was so weak.

But I grew strong at last, and began to walk about, and in the Palace Pleasaunce, one day, I met Sir Guy walking by himself.

So I told him how that I thanked him with all my heart for my life, but he said it was only what a good knight ought to do; for that hearing the mad enterprise I had

ridden on, he had followed me swiftly with a few knights, and so saved me.

He looked stately and grand as he spoke, yet I did not love him, nay, rather hated him, though I tried hard not to do so, for there was some air of pitiless triumph and coldness of heart in him that froze me; so scornfully, too, he said that about "my mad enterprise," as though I *must* be wrong in everything I did. Yet afterwards, as I came to know more, I pitied him instead of hating; but at that time I thought his life was without a shadow, for I did not know that the Lady Alys loved him not.

And now I turned from him, and walked slowly up and down the garden-paths, not exactly thinking, but with some ghosts of former thoughts passing through my mind. The day, too, was most lovely, as it grew towards evening, and I had all the joy of a man lately sick in the flowers and all things; if any bells at that time had begun to chime, I think I should have lain down on the grass and wept; but now there was but the noise of the bees in the yellow musk, and that had not music enough to bring me sorrow.

And as I walked I stooped and picked a

great orange lily, and held it in my hand, and lo! down the garden-walk, the same fair damozel that had before this given me good counsel in the hall.

Thereat I was very glad, and walked to meet her smiling, but she was very grave, and said:

"Fair sir, the Lady Alys des roses wishes to see you in her chamber."

I could not answer a word, but turned, and went with her while she walked slowly beside me, thinking deeply, and picking a rose to pieces as she went; and I, too, thought much, what could she want me for? surely, but for one thing; and yet — and yet.

But when we came to the lady's chamber, behold! before the door, stood a tall knight, fair and strong, and in armour, save his head, who seemed to be guarding the door, though not so as to seem so to all men.

He kissed the damozel eagerly, and then she said to me, "This is Sir William de la Fosse, my true knight;" so the knight took my hand and seemed to have such joy of me, that all the blood came up to my face for pure delight.

But then the damozel Blanche opened the

door and bade me go in while she abode still without; so I entered, when I had put aside the heavy silken hanging that filled the doorway.

And there sat Alys; she arose when she saw me, and stood pale, and with her lips apart, and her hands hanging loose by her side.

And then all doubt and sorrow went quite away from me; I did not even feel drunk with joy, but rather felt that I could take it all in, lose no least fragment of it; then at once I felt that I was beautiful, and brave and true; I had no doubt as to what I should do now.

I went up to her, and first kissed her on the forehead, and then on the feet, and then drew her to me, and with my arms round about her, and her arms hanging loose, and her lips dropped, we held our lips together so long that my eyes failed me, and I could not see her, till I looked at her green raiment.

And she had never spoken to me yet; she seemed just then as if she were going to, for she lifted her eyes to mine, and opened her mouth; but she only said, "Dear Lionel," and fell forward as though she were faint;

and again I held her, and kissed her all over; and then she loosed her hair that it fell to her feet, and when I clipped her next, she threw it over me, that it fell all over my scarlet robes like trickling of some golden well in Paradise.

Then, within a while, we called in the Lady Blanche and Sir William de la Fosse, and while they talked about what we should do, we sat together and kissed; and what they said, I know not.

But I remember, that that night, quite late, Alys and I rode out side by side from the good city in the midst of a great band of knights and men-at-arms, and other bands drew to us as we went, and in three days we reached Sir William's castle, which was called "La Garde des Chevaliers."

And straightway he caused toll the great bell, and to hang out from the highest tower a great banner of red and gold, cut into so many points that it seemed as if it were tattered; for this was the custom of his house when they wanted their vassals together.

And Alys and I stood up in the tower by the great bell as they tolled it; I remember now that I had passed my hand underneath

her hair, so that the fingers of it folded over and just lay on her cheek; she gazed down on the bell, and at every deafening stroke she drew in her breath and opened her eyes to a wide stare downwards.

But on the very day that we came, they arrayed her in gold and flowers (and there were angels and knights and ladies wrought on her gold raiment), and I waited for an hour in the chapel till she came, listening to the swallows outside, and gazing with parted lips at the pictures on the golden walls; but when she came, I knelt down before the altar, and she knelt down and kissed my lips; and then the priest came in, and the singers and the censer-boys; and that chapel was soon confusedly full of golden raiment, and incense, and ladies and singing; in the midst of which I wedded Alys.

And men came into knights' gard till we had two thousand men in it, and great store of munitions of war and provisions.

But Alys and I lived happily together in the painted hall and in the fair water-meadows, and as yet no one came against us.

And still her talk was, of deeds of arms, and she was never tired of letting the serpent

rings of my mail slip off her wrist and long hand, and she would kiss my shield and helm and the gold wings on my surcoat, my mother's work, and would talk of the ineffable joy that would be when we had fought through all the evil that was coming on us.

Also she would take my sword and lay it on her knees and talk to it, telling it how much she loved me.

Yea in all things, O Lord God, Thou knowest that my love was a very child, like thy angels. Oh! my wise soft-handed love! endless passion! endless longing always satisfied!

Think you that the shouting curses of the trumpet broke off our love, or in any ways lessened it? no, most certainly, but from the time the siege began, her cheeks grew thinner, and her passionate face seemed more and more a part of me; now too, whenever I happened to see her between the grim fighting she would do nothing but kiss me all the time, or wring my hands, or take my head on her breast, being so eagerly passionate that sometimes a pang shot through me that she might die.

Till one day they made a breach in the wall, and when I heard of it for the first time, I sickened, and could not call on God; but Alys cut me a tress of her yellow hair and tied it in my helm, and armed me, and saying no word, led me down to the breach by the hand, and then went back most ghastly pale.

So there on the one side of the breach were the spears of William de la Fosse and Lionel of the gold wings, and on the other the spears of King Gilbert and Sir Guy le bon amant, but the King himself was not there; Sir Guy was.

Well, — what would you have? in this world never yet could two thousand men stand against twenty thousand; we were almost pushed back with their spear-points, they were so close together: — slay six of them and the spears were as thick as ever; but if two of our men fell there was straightway a hole.

Yet just at the end of this we drove them back in one charge two yards beyond the breach, and behold in the front rank, Sir Guy, utterly fearless, cool, and collected; nevertheless, with one stroke I broke his

helm, and he fell to the ground before the two armies, even as I fell that day in the lists; and we drove them twenty feet farther, yet they saved Sir Guy.

Well, again, — what would you have? They drove us back again, and they drove us into our inner castle-walls. And I was the last to go in, and just as I was entering, the boldest and nearest of the enemy clutched at my love's hair in my helm, shouting out quite loud, "Whore's hair for John the goldsmith!"

At the hearing of such blasphemy, the Lord gave me such strength, that I turned and caught him by the ribs with my left hand, and with my right, by sheer strength, I tore off his helm and part of his nose with it, and then swinging him round about, dashed his brains out against the castle-walls.

Yet thereby was I nearly slain, for they surrounded me, only Sir William and the others charged out and rescued me, but hardly.

May the Lord help all true men! In an hour we were all fighting pell mell on the walls of the castle itself, and some were slain

outright, and some were wounded, and some yielded themselves and received mercy; but I had scarce the heart to fight any more, because I thought of Alys lying with her face upon the floor and her agonized hands outspread, trying to clutch something, trying to hold to the cracks of the boarding. So when I had seen William de la Fosse slain by many men, I cast my shield and helm over the battlements, and gazed about for a second, and lo! on one of the flanking towers, my gold wings still floated by the side of William's white lion, and in the other one I knew my poor Love, whom they had left quite alone, was lying.

So then I turned into a dark passage and ran till I reached the tower stairs, up that too I sprang as though a ghost were after me, I did so long to kiss her again before I died, to soothe her too, so that she should not feel this day, when in the aftertimes she thought of it as wholly miserable to her. For I knew they would neither slay her nor treat her cruelly, for in sooth all loved her, only they would make her marry Sir Guy le bon amant.

In the topmost room I found her, alas!

alas! lying on the floor, as I said; I came to her and kissed her head as she lay, then raised her up; and I took all my armour off and broke my sword over my knee.

And then I led her to the window away from the fighting, from whence we only saw the quiet country, and kissed her lips till she wept and looked no longer sad and wretched; then I said to her:

"Now, O Love, we must part for a little, it is time for me to go and die."

"Why should you go away?" she said, "they will come here quick enough, no doubt, and I shall have you longer with me if you stay; I do not turn sick at the sight of blood."

"O my poor Love!" And I could not go because of her praying face; surely God would grant anything to such a face as that.

"Oh!" she said, "you will let me have you yet a little longer, I see; also let me kiss your feet."

She threw herself down and kissed them, and then did not get up again at once, but lay there holding my feet.

And while she lay there, behold a sudden tramping that she did not hear, and over the

green hangings the gleam of helmets that she did not see, and then one pushed aside the hangings with his spear, and there stood the armed men.

"Will not somebody weep for my darling?"

She sprung up from my feet with a low, bitter moan, most terrible to hear, she kissed me once on the lips, and then stood aside, with her dear head thrown back, and holding her lovely loose hair strained over her outspread arms, as though she were wearied of all things that had been or that might be.

Then one thrust me through the breast with a spear, and another with his sword, which was three inches broad, gave me a stroke across the thighs that hit to the bone; and as I fell forward one cleft me to the teeth with his axe.

And then I heard my darling shriek.

The Bibelot

IT is one of the little ironies of literature that the only work by which Christopher Smart can be said to exist for us remained considerably more than a century a mere title in English bibliography.[1] *Until Robert Browning's* Parleyings with Certain People of Importance in Their Day *was given to the world in 1887 "A Song to David" seemed a long lost song: "the poppy of oblivion" had lulled to sleep all living recollection of it.*

But with our reading of the third section of Parleyings *these things were changed. If one did not go directly to the original poem one at least accepted Browning's estimate and a little later Mr. George Willis Cooke, (in woefully small type,) reprinted Smart's text.*[2] *It was not, however, really edited with any degree of critical attention until within the past few*

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1 A Song to David *was originally published in separate quarto form, (London, 1763,) and has become a very rare book. The Collected Works, (2 vols., Fcap 8vo. London, 1791,) omitted the* Song *entirely! See a delightful article by Edmund Gosse in* Gossip in a Library *(London, 1891).*

2 *See* A Guide-Book to the Poetic and Dramatic Works of Robert Browning, *by George Willis Cooke. (Boston, 1891), pp. 85-98.*

years.[3] *This edition, through the kindness of Prof. Charles F. Richardson, we now offer our readers, adding from the edition of 1791 what is believed to be an unique portrait of the poet.*

To most men it would appear that Christopher Smart lived a foiled and seemingly ineffective life. The blot in the brain deepened and finally destroyed him. Yet God gave to his creature something of Himself: the Song to David is an eternal witness in His behalf. When the end came, in words doubtless known and loved by Smart, he may have felt and been comforted by the thought:—

'Tis but a night, a long and moonless night;—
We make the grave our bed and then are gone!

Thus at the shut of ev'n, the weary bird
Leaves the wide air, and in some lonely brake
Cow'rs down, and dozes till the dawn of day;
Then claps his well-fledg'd wings, and bears away.

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[3] A Song to David, by Christopher Smart. *Edited with Notes, etc., by J. R. Tutin.* (Crown 8vo. Pp. 51.) London, 1898. *A labour of love, which Mr. Tutin has augmented in another equally unexpected way by a concordance to FitzGerald's Omar.* (London, Macmillan, 1900).

FOR JUNE:

IN THE SHADOWS,
A POEM IN SONNETS,
By
DAVID GRAY.

One man shall crawl
Through life surrounded with all stirring things
Unmoved; and he goes mad: and from the wreck
Of what he was, by his wild talk alone,
You first collect how great a spirit he hid.

ROBERT BROWNING.

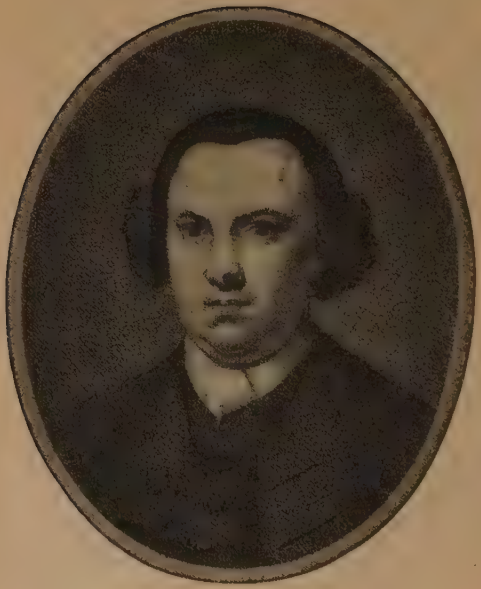
"THIS wonderful poem of Smart's is," said Rossetti, in a published letter to Mr. Caine, "the only great *accomplished* poem of the last century. The *un*accomplished ones are Chatterton's — of course I mean earlier than Blake or Coleridge, and without reckoning so exceptional a genius as Burns. A masterpiece of rich imagery, exhaustive resources, and reverberent sound."

It is, indeed, another and striking illustration of the power of direct speech when directness is born of energy. Smart was possessed by his subject — as entirely possessed as the author of the 'Pilgrim's Progress' was possessed by his, or the author of 'The Ancient Mariner' by his; and where there is true possession — where the fires of the poet's imagination are not choked by self-consciousness or by too much fuel from the intellect — idiosyncrasy, mannerism, and even conventional formulæ are for the time "burnt and purged away."

WILLIAM MICHAEL ROSSETTI,
(*The Athenæum, Feb. 19, 1887.*)

"SAVE for one single lyric, that glows with all the flush and bloom of Eden, Smart would take but a poor place on the English Parnassus. His odes and ballads, his psalms and satires, his masques and his georgics, are not bad, but they are mediocre. . . . But the *Song to David* — the lyric in 516 lines which Smart is so absurdly fabled to have scratched with a key on the white-washed walls of his cell — this was a portent of beauty and originality. Strange to say it was utterly neglected when it appeared, and the editor of the 1791 edition of Smart's works expressly omitted to print it on the ground that it bore too many 'melancholy proofs of the estrangement of Smart's mind' to be fit for republication."

EDMUND GOSSE.
(*Gossip in a Library. London, 1891.*)



A SONG TO DAVID.

I.

O THOU, that sitt'st upon a throne,
With harp of high, majestic tone,
To praise the King of kings:
And voice of heaven, ascending, swell,
Which, while its deeper notes excel,
Clear as a clarion rings:

II.

To bless each valley, grove, and coast,
And charm the cherubs to the post
Of gratitude in throngs;
To keep the days on Zion's Mount,
And send the year to his account,
With dances and with songs:

III.

O servant of God's holiest charge,
The minister of praise at large,
Which thou mayst now receive;
From thy blest mansion hail and hear,
From topmost eminence appear
To this the wreath I weave.

IV.

Great, valiant, pious, good, and clean,
Sublime, contemplative, serene,
  Strong, constant, pleasant, wise!
Bright effluence of exceeding grace;
Best man! the swiftness and the race,
  The peril and the prize!

V.

Great — from the lustre of his crown,
From Samuel's horn, and God's renown,
  Which is the people's voice;
For all the host, from rear to van,
Applauded and embraced the man —
  The man of God's own choice.

VI.

Valiant — the word, and up he rose;
The fight — he triumphed o'er the foes
  Whom God's just laws abhor;
And, armed in gallant faith, he took
Against the boaster, from the brook,
  The weapons of the war.

VII.

Pious — magnificent and grand,
'Twas he the famous temple plann'd,
(The seraph in his soul:)
Foremost to give the Lord his dues,
Foremost to bless the welcome news,
And foremost to condole.

VIII.

Good — from Jehudah's genuine vein,
From God's best nature, good in grain,
His aspect and his heart:
To pity, to forgive, to save,
Witness En-gedi's conscious cave,
And Shimei's blunted dart.

IX.

Clean — if perpetual prayer be pure,
And love, which could itself inure
To fasting and to fear —
Clean in his gestures, hands, and feet,
To smite the lyre, the dance complete,
To play the sword and spear.

X.

Sublime — invention ever young,
Of vast conception, towering tongue,
To God the eternal theme;
Notes from yon exaltations caught,
Unrivalled royalty of thought,
O'er meaner strains supreme.

XI.

Contemplative — on God to fix
His musings, and above the six
The Sabbath-day he blessed;
'Twas then his thoughts self-conquest pruned,
And heavenly melancholy tuned,
To bless and bear the rest.

XII.

Serene — to sow the seeds of peace,
Remembering, when he watched the fleece,
How sweetly Kidron purled —
To further knowledge, silence vice,
And plant perpetual paradise,
When God had calmed the world.

XIII.

Strong — in the Lord, who could defy
Satan, and all his powers that lie
  In sempiternal night;
And hell, and horror, and despair
Were as the lion and the bear
  To his undaunted might.

XIV.

Constant — in love to God, the Truth,
Age, manhood, infancy, and youth:
  To Jonathan his friend
Constant, beyond the verge of death;
And Ziba, and Mephibosheth,
  His endless fame attend.

XV.

Pleasant — and various as the year;
Man, soul, and angel without peer,
  Priest, champion, sage, and boy;
In armour or in ephod clad,
His pomp, his piety was glad;
  Majestic was his joy.

XVI.

Wise — in recovery from his fall,
Whence rose his eminence o'er all,
  Of all the most reviled;
The light of Israel in his ways,
Wise are his precepts, prayer, and praise,
  And counsel to his child.

XVII.

His muse, bright angel of his verse,
Gives balm for all the thorns that pierce,
  For all the pangs that rage;
Blest light, still gaining on the gloom,
The more than Michal of his bloom,
  The Abishag of his age.

XVIII.

He sang of God — the mighty source
Of all things — the stupendous force
  On which all strength depends;
From Whose right arm, beneath Whose eyes,
All period, power, and enterprise
  Commences, reigns, and ends.

XIX.

Angels — their ministry and meed,
Which to and fro with blessings speed,
  Or with their citterns wait;
Where Michael, with his millions, bows,
Where dwells the seraph and his spouse,
  The cherub and her mate.

XX.

Of man — the semblance and effect
Of God and love — the saint elect
  For infinite applause —
To rule the land, and briny broad,
To be laborious in his laud,
  And heroes in his cause.

XXI.

The world — the clustering spheres He made,
The glorious light, the soothing shade,
  Dale, champaign, grove, and hill;
The multitudinous abyss,
Where Secrecy remains in bliss,
  And Wisdom hides her skill.

XXII.

Trees, plants, and flowers — of virtuous root;
Gem yielding blossom, yielding fruit,
  Choice gums and precious balm;
Bless ye the nosegay in the vale,
And with the sweetness of the gale
  Enrich the thankful psalm.

XXIII.

Of fowl — even every beak and wing
Which cheer the winter, hail the spring,
  That live in peace or prey;
They that make music, or that mock,
The quail, the brave domestic cock,
  The raven, swan, and jay.

XXIV.

Of fishes — every size and shape,
Which nature frames of light escape,
  Devouring man to shun:
The shells are in the wealthy deep,
The shoals upon the surface leap,
  And love the glancing sun.

XXV.

Of beasts — the beaver plods his task;
While the sleek tigers roll and bask,
  Nor yet the shades arouse;
Her cave the mining coney scoops;
Where o'er the mead the mountain stoops,
  The kids exult and browse.

XXVI.

Of gems — their virtue and their price,
Which, hid in earth from man's device,
  Their darts of lustre sheath;
The jasper of the master's stamp,
The topaz blazing like a lamp,
  Among the mines beneath.

XXVII.

Blest was the tenderness he felt,
When to his graceful harp he knelt,
  And did for audience call;
When Satan with his hand he quelled,
And in serene suspense he held
  The frantic throes of Saul.

XXVIII.

His furious foes no more maligned
As he such melody divined,
  And sense and soul detained;
Now striking strong, now soothing soft,
He sent the godly sounds aloft,
  Or in delight refrained.

XXIX.

When up to heaven his thoughts he piled,
From fervent lips fair Michal smiled,
  As blush to blush she stood;
And chose herself the queen, and gave
Her utmost from her heart — 'so brave,
  And plays his hymns so good.'

XXX.

The pillars of the Lord are seven,
Which stand from earth to topmost heaven;
  His Wisdom drew the plan;
His Word accomplished the design,
From brightest gem to deepest mine,
  From CHRIST enthroned to Man.

XXXI.

Alpha, the cause of causes, first
In station, fountain, whence the burst
  Of light and blaze of day;
Whence bold attempt, and brave advance,
Have motion, life, and ordinance,
  And heaven itself its stay.

XXXII.

Gamma supports the glorious arch
On which angelic legions march,
  And is with sapphires paved;
Thence the fleet clouds are sent adrift,
And thence the painted folds that lift
  The crimson veil, are waved.

XXXIII.

Eta with living sculpture breathes,
With verdant carvings, flowery wreathes,
  Of never-wasting bloom;
In strong relief his goodly base
All instruments of labour grace,
  The trowel, spade, and loom.

XXXIV.

Next Theta stands to the supreme —
Who formed in number, sign, and scheme,
The illustrious lights that are;
And one addressed his saffron robe,
And one, clad in a silver globe,
Held rule with every star.

XXXV.

Iota's tuned to choral hymns
Of those that fly, while he that swims
In thankful safety lurks;
And foot, and chapiter, and niche,
The various histories enrich
Of God's recorded works.

XXXVI.

Sigma presents the social droves
With him that solitary roves,
And man of all the chief;
Fair on whose face, and stately frame,
Did God impress His hallowed name,
For ocular belief.

XXXVII.

Omega! greatest and the best,
Stands sacred to the day of rest,
  For gratitude and thought;
Which blessed the world upon his pole,
And gave the universe his goal,
  And closed the infernal draught.

XXXVIII.

O David, scholar of the Lord!
Such is thy science, whence reward,
  And infinite degree;
O strength, O sweetness, lasting ripe!
God's harp thy symbol, and thy type
  The lion and the bee!

XXXIX.

There is but One who ne'er rebelled,
But One by passion unimpelled,
  By pleasures unenticed;
He from himself hath semblance sent,
Grand object of his own content,
  And saw the God in Christ.

XL.

Tell them, I AM, Jehovah said
To Moses; while earth heard in dread,
And, smitten to the heart,
At once above, beneath, around,
All Nature, without voice or sound,
Replied, 'O Lord, THOU ART.'

XLI.

Thou art — to give and to confirm,
For each his talent and his term;
All flesh thy bounties share:
Thou shalt not call thy brother fool:
The porches of the Christian school
Are meekness, peace, and prayer.

XLII.

Open and naked of offence,
Man's made of mercy, soul, and sense:
God armed the snail and wilk;
Be good to him that pulls thy plough;
Due food and care, due rest allow
For her that yields thee milk.

XLIII.

Rise up before the hoary head,
And God's benign commandment dread,
Which says thou shalt not die:
'Not as I will, but as Thou wilt,'
Prayed He, whose conscience knew no guilt;
With Whose blessed pattern vie.

XLIV.

Use all thy passions! love is thine,
And joy and jealousy divine;
Thine hope's eternal fort,
And care thy leisure to disturb,
With fear concupiscence to curb,
And rapture to transport.

XLV.

Act simply, as occasion asks;
Put mellow wine in seasoned casks;
Till not with ass and bull:
Remember thy baptismal bond;
Keep thy commixtures foul and fond,
Nor work thy flax with wool.

XLVI.

Distribute; pay the Lord His tithe,
And make the widow's heart-strings blithe;
  Resort with those that weep:
As you from all and each expect,
For all and each thy love direct,
  And render as you reap.

XLVII.

The slander and its bearer spurn,
And propagating praise sojourn
  To make thy welcome last;
Turn from old Adam to the New:
By hope futurity pursue:
  Look upwards to the past.

XLVIII.

Control thine eye, salute success,
Honour the wiser, happier bless,
  And for their neighbour feel;
Grutch not of mammon and his leaven,
Work emulation up to heaven
  By knowledge and by zeal.

XLIX.

O David, highest in the list
Of worthies, on God's ways insist,
  The genuine word repeat!
Vain are the documents of men,
And vain the flourish of the pen
  That keeps the fool's conceit.

L.

Praise above all — for praise prevails;
Heap up the measure, load the scales,
  And good to goodness add:
The generous soul her Saviour aids,
But peevish obloquy degrades;
  The Lord is great and glad.

LI.

For Adoration all the ranks
Of Angels yield eternal thanks,
  And David in the midst:
With God's good poor, which, last and least
In man's esteem, Thou to Thy feast,
  O blessèd Bridegroom, bidst.

LII.

For Adoration seasons change,
And order, truth, and beauty range,
  Adjust, attract, and fill:
The grass the polyanthus checks;
And polished porphyry reflects,
  By the descending rill.

LIII.

Rich almonds colour to the prime
For Adoration; tendrils climb,
  And fruit-trees pledge their gems;
And Ivis, with her gorgeous vest,
Builds for her eggs her cunning nest,
  And bell-flowers bow their stems.

LIV.

With vinous syrup cedars spout;
From rocks pure honey gushing out,
  For Adoration springs:
All scenes of painting crowd the map
Of nature; to the mermaid's pap
  The scalèd infant clings.

LV.

The spotted ounce and playsome cubs
Run rustling 'mong the flowering shrubs,
And lizards feed the moss;
For Adoration beasts embark,
While waves upholding halcyon's ark
No longer roar and toss.

LVI.

While Israel sits beneath his fig,
With coral root and amber sprig
The weaned adventurer sports;
Where to the palm the jasmine cleaves,
For Adoration 'mong the leaves
The gale his peace reports.

LVII.

Increasing days their reign exalt,
Nor in the pink and mottled vault
The opposing spirits tilt;
And by the coasting reader spied,
The silverlings and crusions glide
For Adoration gilt.

LVIII.

For Adoration ripening canes,
And cocoa's purest milk detains
  The western pilgrim's staff;
Where rain in clasping boughs enclosed,
And vines with oranges disposed,
  Embower the social laugh.

LIX.

Now labour his reward receives,
For Adoration counts his sheaves,
  To peace, her bounteous prince;
The nect'rine his strong tint imbibes,
And apples of ten thousand tribes,
  And quick peculiar quince.

LX.

The wealthy crops of whitening rice
'Mongst thyine woods and groves of spice,
  For Adoration grow;
And, marshalled in the fencèd land,
The peaches and pomegranates stand,
  Where wild carnations blow.

LXI.

The laurels with the winter strive;
The crocus burnishes alive
  Upon the snow-clad earth;
For Adoration myrtles stay
To keep the garden from dismay,
  And bless the sight from dearth.

LXII.

The pheasant shows his pompous neck;
And ermine, jealous of a speck,
  With fear eludes offence:
The sable, with his glossy pride,
For Adoration is descried,
  Where frosts the waves condense.

LXIII.

The cheerful holly, pensive yew,
And holy thorn, their trim renew;
  The squirrel hoards his nuts;
All creatures batten o'er their stores,
And careful nature all her doors
  For Adoration shuts.

LXIV.

For Adoration, David's Psalms
Lift up the heart to deeds of alms;
  And he, who kneels and chants,
Prevails his passions to control,
Finds meat and medicine to the soul,
  Which for translation pants.

LXV.

For Adoration, beyond match,
The scholar bullfinch aims to catch
  The soft flute's ivory touch;
And, careless, on the hazel spray
The daring redbreast keeps at bay
  The damsel's greedy clutch.

LXVI.

For Adoration, in the skies,
The Lord's philosopher espies
  The dog, the ram, and rose;
The planets' ring, Orion's sword;
Nor is his greatness less adored
  In the vile worm that glows.

LXVII.

For Adoration, on the strings
The western breezes work their wings,
  The captive ear to soothe —
Hark! 'tis a voice — how still, and small —
That makes the cataracts to fall,
  Or bids the sea be smooth!

LXVIII.

For Adoration, incense comes
From bezoar, and Arabian gums,
  And from the civet's fur:
But as for prayer, or e'er it faints,
Far better is the breath of saints
  Than galbanum or myrrh.

LXIX.

For Adoration, from the down
Of damsons to the anana's crown,
  God sends to tempt the taste;
And while the luscious zest invites
The sense, that in the scene delights,
  Commands desire be chaste.

LXX.

For Adoration, all the paths
Of grace are open, all the baths
  Of purity refresh;
And all the rays of glory beam
To deck the man of God's esteem,
  Who triumphs o'er the flesh.

LXXI.

For Adoration, in the dome
Of CHRIST, the sparrows find a home;
  And on his olives perch:
The swallow also dwells with thee,
O man of GOD'S humility,
  Within his Saviour's Church.

LXXII.

Sweet is the dew that falls betimes,
And drops upon the leafy limes;
  Sweet, Hermon's fragrant air:
Sweet is the lily's silver bell,
And sweet the wakeful tapers' smell
  That watch for early prayer.

LXXIII.

Sweet the young nurse, with love intense,
Which smiles o'er sleeping innocence;
  Sweet when the lost arrive:
Sweet the musician's ardour beats,
While his vague mind's in quest of sweets,
  The choicest flowers to hive.

LXXIV.

Sweeter, in all the strains of love,
The language of thy turtle-dove,
  Paired to thy swelling chord;
Sweeter, with every grace endued,
The glory of thy gratitude,
  Respired unto the Lord.

LXXV.

Strong is the horse upon his speed;
Strong in pursuit the rapid glede,
  Which makes at once his game:
Strong the tall ostrich on the ground;
Strong through the turbulent profound
  Shoots Xiphias to his aim.

LXXVI.

Strong is the lion — like a coal
His eyeball — like a bastion's mole
  His chest against the foes:
Strong the gier-eagle on his sail,
Strong against tide the enormous whale
  Emerges as he goes.

LXXVII.

But stronger still in earth and air,
And in the sea, the man of prayer,
  And far beneath the tide:
And in the seat to faith assigned,
Where ask is have, where seek is find,
  Where knock is open wide.

LXXVIII.

Beauteous the fleet before the gale;
Beauteous the multitudes in mail,
  Ranked arms, and crested heads;
Beauteous the garden's umbrage mild,
Walk, water, meditated wild,
  And all the bloomy beds.

LXXIX.

Beauteous the moon full on the lawn;
And beauteous when the veil's withdrawn,
  The virgin to her spouse:
Beauteous the temple, decked and filled,
When to the heaven of heavens they build
  Their heart-directed vows.

LXXX.

Beauteous, yea beauteous more than these,
The Shepherd King upon his knees,
  For his momentous trust;
With wish of infinite conceit,
For man, beast, mute, the small and great,
  And prostrate dust to dust.

LXXXI.

Precious the bounteous widow's mite;
And precious, for extreme delight,
  The largess from the churl:
Precious the ruby's blushing blaze,
And alba's blest imperial rays,
  And pure cerulean pearl.

LXXXII.

Precious the penitential tear;
And precious is the sigh sincere;
Acceptable to God:
And precious are the winning flowers,
In gladsome Israel's feast of bowers,
Bound on the hallowed sod.

LXXXIII.

More precious that diviner part
Of David, even the Lord's own heart,
Great, beautiful, and new;
In all things where it was intent,
In all extremes, in each event,
Proof — answering true to true.

LXXXIV.

Glorious the sun in mid career;
Glorious the assembled fires appear;
Glorious the comet's train:
Glorious the trumpet and alarm;
Glorious the Almighty's stretched-out arm;
Glorious the enraptured main:

LXXXV.

Glorious the northern lights a-stream;
Glorious the song, when God's the theme;
  Glorious the thunder's roar:
Glorious Hosannah from the den;
Glorious the catholic Amen;
  Glorious the martyr's gore:

LXXXVI.

Glorious, — more glorious, — is the crown
Of Him that brought salvation down,
  By meekness called Thy Son;
Thou that stupendous truth believed; —
And now the matchless deed's achieved,
  Determined, Dared, and Done.

NOTES.

I.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE.

CHRISTOPHER SMART was born at Shipburne, in Kent, on the 11th of April, 1722. On his mother's side he was descended from the celebrated Bernard Giplin, "the Apostle of the North." His father was steward to Lord Barnard, and died while yet the Poet was a boy. By means of an annual allowance from the Duchess of Cleveland, through his lordship's influence, he was enabled, in 1739, to enter the University of Cambridge, where he speedily distinguished himself, and for four successive years eclipsed all his competitors. He was elected a Fellow of Pembroke in 1745, and took his degree of Master of Arts in 1747. Quitting college in 1752, he soon after relinquished his fellowship. In 1753, he married Miss Anna Maria Carnan, and embarked on a literary life in London, where he made the acquaintance of Garrick, Johnson, and other notabilities of that time. His literary labours brought him in but a meagre living; he became intemperate and thoughtless, and at last was confined in an asylum, in which his *chef-d'œuvre*, the "Song to David," was written or indented, with a key upon the wainscot of his room, the authorities of the place denying him the use of pen, ink, and paper. In Boswell's "Life of Johnson" is recorded a conversation between Johnson and Dr. Burney, on the subject of this note, in which we get a glimpse of Smart's condition then, and a characteristic utterance from the old lexicographer. *Burney*—"How does poor Smart do, Sir? Is he likely to recover?" *Johnson*—"It seems as if his mind had ceased to struggle with the disease, for he grows fat upon it." *Burney*—"Perhaps, Sir, that may be from want of exercise." *Johnson*—"No, Sir, he has as much

exercise as he used to have, for he digs in the garden. Indeed, before his confinement he used to walk to the alehouse, but he was *carried* back again. I do not think he ought to be shut up. His infirmities were not noxious to society. He insisted on people praying with him; and I'd as lief pray with Kit Smart as anyone else. Another charge was, that he did not love clean linen; and I have no passion for it." "Smart's was an unhappy life," remarks Southey ("Specimens of the Later English Poets"): "imprudent, drunken, poor, diseased, and, at length, insane. Yet, he must not be classed with such as Boyse and Savage, who were redeemed by no virtue, for Smart was friendly, liberal and affectionate. His piety was fervent, and when composing his religious poems he was frequently so impressed as to write upon his knees." This unfortunate man of genius died a prisoner for debt in the King's Bench, on May 18th, 1770, the year of the birth of Wordsworth.

II.

NOTES TO THE POEM.

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IV. Cf. Milton (*Par. Lost*, iii, 6.)—"Bright effluence or bright essence increate."

VI. *The boaster:* Goliath. See 1 Samuel, xvii.

VIII. *Jehudah:* Judah.

XIX. *Citterns* are harp-like instruments. The word is not unfrequently spelt *cithern*. See 1 Maccabees, iv, 54.

XX. *And briny broad:* There is, in spite of its baldness, a breadth of suggestiveness in this phrase, which is rare in the literature of Smart's time. It is a distinct anticipation of the more modern manner in describing the ocean.

XXX. *The Pillars of the Lord are seven:* and "the monuments of God's works in the first week," being named in the succeeding stanzas, *Alpha* (st. 31), *Gamma* (st. 32), *Eta* (st. 33), *Theta* (st. 34), *Iota* (st. 35), *Sigma* (st. 36), *Omega* (st. 37). See Genesis, i, 3–28; and ii, 2–3.

XLVIII. *Grutch:* doubtless used in the sense of grudge.

LIII. *Ivis:* the humming-bird.

LV. *The spotted ounce:* a carnivorous animal of Asia, somewhat resembling a small leopard.

LVII. *Silverlings and crusions* are fish; the former may mean 'silver' trout, the latter the kind spoken of by Isaac Walton's Editor, Hawkins (See "Complete Angler," Bohn's Ed., p. 294): "Since Walton wrote, there has been brought into England from Germany a species of small

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fish, resembling carp in shape and colour, called Crucians; with which many ponds are now plentifully stocked."

LX. *Thyine:* sweet, precious. See Rev., xviii, 12.

LXVI. Cf. Shelley (*Epipsychidion*, ll, 128–9):—

"The spirit of the worm beneath the sod,
In love and worship, blends itself with God."

LXVII. *On the strings*, etc.: *i. e.*, of the Æolian harp.

LXVIII. *Bezoar* is a concretion found in the intestines of certain animals (especially ruminants).

LXVIII. *Galbanum* was one of the ingredients of sacred incense. See Exodus, xxx, 34.

LXIX. *Anana:* a species of pine apple.

LXXV. *Glede:* the hawk. See Deut., xiv, 13.

LXXV. Cf. "turbulent profound" with "briny broad" (xx).

LXXV. *Xiphias:* the sword-fish.

LXXVI. *Gier-eagle:* a kind of eagle or vulture. See Leviticus, xi, 18; and Deuteronomy, xiv, 17.

The Bibelot

DAVID GRAY, *a young Scotch poet born January 29th, 1838, died,—in his own pathetic words, "not knowing what it was to live,"—December 3d, 1861. His only book,* The Luggie and other Poems, *is a little green-bound duodecimo which, never widely read at best, is perhaps still less likely to be read in the future.*[1] *Something is here, however, that appeals to every true lover of minor verse. Nor is he to be envied who could peruse the story of the poet's short life without a renewed sense of tears in mortal things.*

If Robert Buchanan should ever win pardon for his early and late abuse of men who are his betters, it would be for some such act of love as a tender tribute to the memory of this same David Gray.[2] *It remains the most beautiful thing in his*

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1 *A specimen page was shown him the day before his death. The book came out a few months later,* (*London, 1862.*) *The first American edition is dated Boston, 1865. The final re-issue with additional poems appeared in Glasgow in 1886.*

2 *See* David Gray, and other Essays, chiefly on Poetry, by Robert Buchanan. (*London, 1868.*)

uncritical and contentious life. Friends they were—

"Two friends, in interchange of heart and soul;
But suddenly Death changed his countenance,
And graved him in the darkness, far from me."

We are now to read In the Shadows *a sonnet-sequence written when the end was very near.*

"'Twas not a life,
'Twas but a piece of childhood thrown away,"—

affecting words repeated with poignant emotion by Gray in his last letter to a friend. But the still older saying was also much in his mind: Quem Di diligunt, adolescens moritur. *And a modern poet has rounded out this sweet old Pagan thought:*

"Whom the gods love die young,
O bright Elect!
No note of sorrow all your notes among,
Nor cry deject."

Yes, we may well repeat,—for it sometimes happens that the music in us dies out before we die ourselves:—

"Whom the gods love die young,
O blessed fate!"

FOR JULY:

THE FIELD-PLAY:
By
RICHARD JEFFERIES.

IN THE SHADOWS:
A POEM IN SONNETS.

Poet gentle-hearted,
Are you then departed,
And have you ceased to dream the dream we loved of old so well?
Has the deeply cherished
Aspiration perished,
And are you happy, David, in that heaven where you dwell?
Have you found the secret
We, so wildly, sought for,
And is your soul enswathed, at last, in the singing robes you fought for?

. . . . . .

O Mystery! O Passion!
To sit on earth, and fashion,
What floods of music visibled may fill that fancied place!
To think, the least that singeth,
Aspireth and upspringeth,
May weep glad tears on Keats's breast and look in Milton's face!
When human power and failure
Are equalized for ever,
And the one great Light that haloes all is the passionate bright endeavour!

ROBERT BUCHANAN.
(*To David in Heaven.*)

"THE book of poems written, and the writer laid quietly down in the Auld Aisle burying ground, had David Gray wholly done with earth? No; for he worked from the grave on one who loved him with a love transcending that of woman. In the weaver's cottage at Merkland subsisted tender sorrow and affectionate remembrance; but something more. The shadow lay in the cottage; a light had departed which would never again be seen on sea or land; and David Gray, the hand-loom weaver, the father of the poet, felt that the meaning had departed out of his simple life. . . . There was a dream-life, it appeared, beyond the work in the fields and the loom. His son, whom he had thought mad at first, was crowned and honoured for the very things which his parents had thought useless. . . . He was conscious, now, that the glory of his days was beyond that grave in the kirkyard. He was like one that walks in a mist, his eyes full of tears. But he said little of his griefs,—little, that is to say, in the way of direct complaint. 'We feel very weary now David has gone!' was all the plaint I knew him to utter; he grieved so silently, wondered so speechlessly. . . . .

Father and child are side by side. A little cloud, a pathetic mystery, came between them in life; but that is all over. The old hand-loom weaver, who never wrote a verse, unconsciously reached his son's stature some time ere he passed away. The mysterious thing called 'poetry,' which operated such changes in his simple life, became all clear at last—in that final moment when the world's meanings become transparent, and nothing is left but to swoon back with closed eyes into the darkness, confiding in God's mercy, content either to waken at His footstool, or to rest painlessly for evermore."

ROBERT BUCHANAN.

(*David Gray, and other Essays, chiefly of Poetry. London, 1868.*)

INDUCTION.

ENTER, scared mortal! and in awe behold
The chancel of a dying poet's mind,
Hung round, ah! not adorned, with pictures bold
And quaint, but roughly touched for the refined.
The chancel not the charnel house! For I
To God have raised a shrine immaculate
Therein, whereon His name to glorify,
And daily mercies meekly celebrate.
So in, scared breather! here no hint of death—
Skull or cross-bones suggesting sceptic fear;
Yea rather calmer beauty, purer breath
Inhaled from a diviner atmosphere.

I.

If it must be; if it must be, O God!
That I die young, and make no further moans
That, underneath the unrespective sod,
In unescutcheoned privacy, my bones
Shall crumble soon, — then give me strength to bear
The last convulsive throe of too sweet breath!
I tremble from the edge of life, to dare
The dark and fatal leap, having no faith,
No glorious yearning for the Apocalypse;
But, like a child that in the night-time cries
For light, I cry; forgetting the eclipse
Of knowledge and our human destinies.
O peevish and uncertain soul! obey
The law of life in patience till the Day.

II.

"Whom the gods love die young." The thought is old;
And yet it soothed the sweet Athenian mind.
I take it with all pleasure, overbold,
Perhaps, yet to its virtue much inclined
By an inherent love for what is fair.
This is the utter poetry of woe —
That the bright-flashing gods should cure despair
By love, and make youth precious here below.
I die, being young; and, dying, could become
A pagan, with the tender Grecian trust.
Let death, the fell anatomy, benumb
The hand that writes, and fill my mouth with dust —
Chant no funereal theme, but, with a choral
Hymn, O ye mourners! hail immortal youth auroral!

III.

With the tear-worthy four, consumption killed
In youthful prime, before the nebulous mind
Had its symmetric shapeliness defined,
Had its transcendent destiny fulfilled. —
May future ages grant me gracious room,
With Pollok, in the voiceless solitude
Finding his holiest rapture, happiest mood;
Poor White for ever poring o'er the tomb;
With Keats, whose lucid fancy mounting far
Saw heaven as an intenser, a more keen
Redintegration of the Beauty seen
And felt by all the breathers on this star;
With gentle Bruce, flinging melodious blame
Upon the Future for an uncompleted name.

IV.

Oh many a time with Ovid have I borne
My father's vain, yet well-meant reprimand,
To leave the sweet-air'd, clover-purpled land
Of rhyme — its Lares loftily forlorn,
With all their pure humanities unworn —
To batten on the bare Theologies!
To quench a glory lighted at the skies,
Fed on one essence with the silver morn,
Were of all blasphemies the most insane.
So deeplier given to the delicious spell
I clung to thee, heart-soothing Poesy!
Now on a sick-bed rack'd with arrowy pain
I lift white hands of gratitude, and cry,
Spirit of God in Milton! was it well?

V.

Last night, on coughing slightly with sharp pain,
There came arterial blood, and with a sigh
Of absolute grief I cried in bitter vein,
That drop is my death-warrant: I must die.
Poor meagre life is mine, meagre and poor!
Rather a piece of childhood thrown away;
An adumbration faint; the overture
To stifled music; year that ends in May;
The sweet beginning of a tale unknown;
A dream unspoken; promise unfulfilled;
A morning with no noon, a rose unblown —
All its deep rich vermilion crushed and killed
I' th' bud by frost: — Thus in false fear I cried,
Forgetting that to abolish death Christ died.

VI.

SWEETLY, my mother! Go not yet away —
I have not told my story. Oh, not yet,
With the fair past before me, can I lay
My cheek upon the pillow to forget.
O sweet, fair past, my twenty years of youth
Thus thrown away, not fashioning a man;
But fashioning a memory, forsooth!
More feminine than follower of Pan.
O God! let me not die for years and more!
Fulfil Thyself, and I will live then surely
Longer than a mere childhood. Now heart-sore,
Weary, with being weary — weary, purely.
In dying, mother, I can find no pleasure
Except in being near thee without measure.

VII.

Hew Atlas for my monument; upraise
A pyramid for my tomb, that, undestroyed
By rank, oblivion, and the hungry void,
My name shall echo through prospective days.
O careless conqueror! cold, abysmal grave!
Is it not sad — is it not sad, my heart —
To smother young ambition, and depart
Unhonoured and unwilling, like death's slave?
No rare immortal remnant of my thought
Embalms my life; no poem, firmly reared
Against the shock of time, ignobly feared —
But all my life's progression come to nought.
Hew Atlas! build a pyramid in a plain!
Oh, cool the fever burning in my brain!

VIII.

From this entangling labyrinthine maze
Of doctrine, creed, and theory; from vague
Vain speculations; the detested plague
Of spiritual pride, and vile affrays
Sectarian, good Lord, deliver me!
Nature! thy placid monitory glory
Shines uninterrogated, while the story
Goes round of this and that theology,
This creed, and that, till patience close the list.
Once more on Carronben's wind-shrilling height
To sit in sovereign solitude, and quite
Forget the hollow world — a pantheist
Beyond Bonaventura! This were cheer
Passing the tedious tale of shallow pulpiteer.

IX.

A VALE of tears, a wilderness of woe,
A sad unmeaning mystery of strife;
Reason with Passion strives, and Feeling ever
Battles with Conscience, clear eyed arbiter.
Thus spake I in sad mood not long ago,
To my dear father, of this human life,
Its jars and phantasies. Soft answered he,
With soul of love strong as a mountain river:
We make ourselves — Son, you are what you are
Neither by fate nor providence nor cause
External: all unformed humanity
Waiteth the stamp of individual laws;
And as you love and act, the plastic spirit
Doth the impression evermore inherit.

X.

LAST Autumn we were four, and travelled far
With Phœbe in her golden plenilune,
O'er stubble-fields where sheaves of harvest boon
Stood slanted. Many a clear and stedfast star
Twinkled its radiance thro' crisp-leaved beeches,
Over the farm to which, with snatches rare
Of ancient ballads, songs, and saucy speeches,
He hurried, happy mad. Then each had there
A dove-eyed sister pining for him, four
Fair ladies legacied with loveliness,
Chaste as a group of stars, or lilies blown
In rural nunnery. O God! Thy sore
Strange ways expound. Two to the grave have gone
Without apparent reason more or less.

XI.

Now, while the long-delaying ash assumes
The delicate April green, and, loud and clear,
Through the cool, yellow, mellow twilight glooms,
The thrush's song enchants the captive ear;
Now, while a shower is pleasant in the falling,
Stirring the still perfume that wakes around;
Now, that doves mourn, and from the distance calling,
The cuckoo answers, with a sovereign sound, —
Come, with thy native heart, O true and tried!
But leave all books; for what with converse high,
Flavoured with Attic wit, the time shall glide
On smoothly, as a river floweth by,
Or as on stately pinion, through the grey
Evening, the culver cuts his liquid way.

XII.

WHY are all fair things at their death the fairest?
Beauty the beautifullest in decay?
Why doth rich sunset clothe each closing day
With ever-new apparelling the rarest?
Why are the sweetest melodies all born
Of pain and sorrow? Mourneth not the dove,
In the green forest gloom, an absent love?
Leaning her breast against that cruel thorn,
Doth not the nightingale, poor bird, complain
And integrate her uncontrollable woe
To such perfection, that to hear is pain?
Thus, Sorrow and Death — alone realities —
Sweeten their ministration, and bestow
On troublous life a relish of the skies!

XIII.

And, well-belovëd, is this all, this all?
Gone, like a vapour which the potent morn
Kills, and in killing glorifies! I call
Through the lone night for thee, my dear first-born
Soul-fellow! but my heart vibrates in vain.
Ah! well I know, and often fancy forms
The weather-blown churchyard where thou art lain —
The churchyard whistling to the frequent storms.
But down the valley, by the river side,
Huge walnut-trees — bronze-foliaged, motionless
As leaves of metal — in their shadows hide
Warm nests, low music, and true tenderness.
But thou, betrothed! art far from me, from me.
O heart! be merciful — I loved him utterly.

XIV.

FATHER! when I have passed, with deathly swoon,
Into the ghost-world, immaterial, dim,
O may nor time nor circumstance dislimn
My image from thy memory, as noon
Steals from the fainting bloom the cooling dew!
Like flower, itself completing bud and bell,
In lonely thicket, be thy sorrow true,
And in expression secret. Worse than hell
To see the grave hypocrisy — to hear
The crocodilian sighs of summer friends
Outraging grief's assuasive, holy ends!
But thou art faithful, father, and sincere;
And in thy brain the love of me shall dwell
Like the memorial music in the curved sea-shell.

XV.

From my sick-bed gazing upon the west,
Where all the bright effulgencies of day
Lay steeped in sunless vapours, raw and gray,—
Herein (methought) is mournfully exprest
The end of false ambitions, sullen doom
Of my brave hopes, Promethean desires:
Barren and perfumeless, my name expires
Like summer-day setting in joyless gloom.
Yet faint I not in sceptical dismay,
Upheld by the belief that all pure thought
Is deathless, perfect: that the truths out-wrought
By the laborious mind cannot decay,
Being evolutions of that Sovereign Mind
Akin to man's; yet orbed, exhaustless, undefined.

XVI.

The daisy-flower is to the summer sweet,
  Though utterly unknown it live and die;
The spheral harmony were incomplete
  Did the dew'd laverock mount no more the sky,
  Because her music's linkëd sorcery
Bewitched no mortal heart to heavenly mood.
  This is the law of nature, that the deed
Should dedicate its excellence to God,
  And in so doing find sufficient meed.
Then why should I make these heart-burning cries,
  In sickly rhyme with morbid feeling rife,
For fame and temporal felicities?
Forgetting that in holy labour lies
  The scholarship severe of human life.

XVII.

O God, it is a terrible thing to die
Into the inextinguishable life;
To leave this known world with a feeble cry,
All its poor jarring and ignoble strife.
O that some shadowy spectre would disclose
The Future, and the soul's confineless hunger
Satisfy with some knowledge of respose!
For here the lust of avarice waxeth stronger,
Making life hateful; youth alone is true,
Full of a glorious self-forgetfulness:
Better to die inhabiting the new
Kingdom of faith and promise, and confess,
Even in the agony and last eclipse,
Some revelation of the Apocalypse!

XVIII.

WISE in his day that heathen emperor,
To whom, each morrow, came a slave, and cried —
"Philip, remember thou must die;" no more.
To me such daily voice were misapplied —
Disease guests with me; and each cough, or cramp,
Or aching, like the Macedonian slave,
Is my *memento mori*. 'Tis the stamp
Of God's true life to be in dying brave.
"I fear not death, but dying" * — not the long
Hereafter, sweetened by immortal love;
But the quick, terrible last breath — the strong
Convulsion. Oh, my Lord of breath above!
Grant me a quiet end, in easeful rest —
A sweet removal, on my mother's breast.

*This is a saying of Socrates.

XIX.

October's gold is dim — the forests rot,
The weary rain falls ceaseless, while the day
Is wrapp'd in damp. In mire of village way
The hedge-row leaves are stamp'd, and, all forgot,
The broodless nest sits visible in the thorn.
Autumn, among her drooping marigolds,
Weeps all her garnered sheaves, and empty folds,
And dripping orchards — plundered and forlorn.
The season is a dead one, and I die!
No more, no more for me the spring shall make
A resurrection in the earth and take
The death from out her heart — O God, I die!
The cold throat-mist creeps nearer, till I breathe
Corruption. Drop, stark night, upon my death!

XX.

Die down, O dismal day! and let me live.
And come, blue deeps! magnificently strewn
With coloured clouds — large, light, and fugitive —
By upper winds through pompous motions blown.
Now it is death in life — a vapour dense
Creeps round my window till I cannot see
The far snow-shining mountains, and the glens
Shagging the mountain-tops. O God! make free
This barren, shackled earth, so deadly cold —
Breathe gently forth Thy spring, till winter flies
In rude amazement, fearful and yet bold,
While she performs her custom'd charities.
I weigh the loaded hours till life is bare —
O God! for one clear day, a snowdrop, and sweet air!

XXI.

SOMETIMES, when sunshine and blue sky prevail —
When spent winds sleep, and, from the budding larch,
Small birds, with incomplete, vague sweetness, hail
The unconfirmed, yet quickening life of March, —
Then say I to myself, half-eased of care,
Toying with hope as with a maiden's token —
"This glorious, invisible fresh air
Will clear my blood till the disease be broken."
But slowly, from the wild and infinite west,
Up-sails a cloud, full-charged with bitter sleet.
The omen gives my spirit deep unrest;
I fling aside the hope, as indiscreet —
A false enchantment, treacherous and fair —
And sink into my habit of despair.

XXII.

O WINTER! wilt thou never, never go?
O Summer! but I weary for thy coming;
Longing once more to hear the Luggie flow,
And frugal bees laboriously humming.
Now, the east wind diseases the infirm,
And I must crouch in corners from rough weather.
Sometimes a winter sunset is a charm —
When the fired clouds, compacted, blaze together,
And the large sun dips, red, behind the hills.
I, from my window, can behold this pleasure;
And the eternal moon, what time she fills
Her orb with argent, treading a soft measure,
With queenly motion of a bridal mood,
Through the white spaces of infinitude.

XXIII.

Oh, beautiful moon! Oh, beautiful moon! again
Thou persecutest me until I bend
My brow, and soothe the aching of my brain.
I cannot see what handmaidens attend
Thy silver passage as the heaven clears;
For, like a slender mist, a sweet vexation
Works in my heart, till the impulsive tears
Confess the bitter pain of adoration.
Oh, too, too beautiful moon! lift the white shell
Of thy soft splendour through the shining air!
I own the magic power, the witching spell,
And, blinded by thy beauty, call thee fair!
Alas! not often now thy silver horn
Shall me delight with dreams and mystic love forlorn!

XXIV.

'Tis April, yet the wind retains its tooth.
I cannot venture in the biting air,
But sit and feign wild trash, and dreams uncouth,
"Stretched on the rack of a too easy chair."
And when the day has howled itself to sleep,
The lamp is lighted in my little room;
And lowly, as the tender lapwings creep,
Comes my own mother, with her love's perfume.
O living sons with living mothers! learn
Their worth, and use them gently, with no chiding;
For youth, I know, is quick; of temper stern
Sometimes; and apt to blunder without guiding.
So was I long, but now I see her move,
Transfigured in the radiant mist of love.

XXV.

LYING awake at holy eventide,
While in clear mournfulness the throstle's hymn
Hushes the night, and the great west, grown dim,
Laments the sunset's evanescent pride:
Lo! I behold an orb of silver brightly
Grow from the fringe of sunset, like a dream
From Thought's severe infinitude, and nightly
Show forth God's glory in its sacred gleam.
Ah, Hesper! maidenliest star that ere
Twinkled in firmament! cool gloaming's prime
Cheerer, whose fairness maketh wondrous fair
Old pastorals, and the Spenserian rhyme: —
Thy soft seduction doth my soul enthral
Like music, with a dying, dying fall!

XXVI.

THERE are three bonnie Scottish melodies,
So native to the music of my soul,
That of its humours they seem prophecies.
The ravishment of Chaucer was less whole,
Less perfect, when the April nightingale
Let itself in upon him. Surely, Lord!
Before whom psaltery and clarichord,
Concentual with saintly song, prevail,
There lurks some subtle sorcery, to Thee
And heaven akin, in each woe-burning air!
Land of the Leal, and *Bonnie Bessie Lee*,
And *Home, Sweet Home*, the lilt of love's despair.
Now, in remembrance even, the feelings speak,
For lo! a shower of grace is on my cheek.

XXVII.

"Thou art wearin' awa', Jean,
Like snaw when it's thaw, Jean;
Thou art wearin' awa'
To the land o' the leal."

O THE impassable sorrow, mother mine!
Of the sweet, mournful air which, clear and well,
For me thou singest! Never the divine
Mahomedan harper, famous Israfel,
Such rich enchanting luxury of woe
Elicited from all his golden strings!
Therefore, dear singer sad! chant clear, and low,
And lovingly, the bard's imaginings,
O poet unknown! conning thy verses o'er
In lone, dim places, sorrowfully sweet;
And O musician! touching the quick core
Of pity, when thy skilful closes meet —
My tears confess your witchery as they flow,
Since I, too, *wear* away like the unenduring snow.

XXVIII.

UPLIFT in unparticipated night
Oh indefinable Being! far retired
From mortal ken in uncreated light:
While demonstrating glories unacquired
When shall the wavering sciences evolve
The infinite secret, Thee? What mind shall scan
The tenour of Thy workmanship, or solve
The dark, perplexing destiny of man?
Oh! in the hereafter border-land of wonder,
Shall the proud world's inveterate tale be told,
The curtain of all mysteries torn asunder,
The cerements from the living soul unrolled?
Impatient questioner, soon, soon shall death
Reveal to thee these dim phantasmata of faith.

XXIX.

AND thus proceeds the mode of human life
From mystery to mystery again;
From God to God, thro' grandeur, grief, and strife,
A hurried plunge into the dark inane
Whence we had lately sprung. And is't for ever?
Ah! sense is blind beyond the gaping clay,
And all the eyes of faith can see it never.
We know the bright-haired sun will bring the day,
Like glorious book of silent prophecy;
Majestic night assume her starry throne;
The wondrous seasons come and go: but we
Die, unto mortal ken for ever gone.
Who shall pry further? who shall kindle light
In the dread bosom of the infinite?

XXX.

O THOU of purer eyes than to behold
Uncleanness! sift my soul, removing all
Strange thoughts, imaginings fantastical,
Iniquitous allurements manifold.
Make it into a spiritual ark; abode
Severely sacred, perfumed, sanctified,
Wherein the Prince of Purities may abide —
The holy and eternal Spirit of God.
The gross, adhesive loathsomeness of sin,
Give me to see. Yet, O far more, far more,
That beautiful purity which the saints adore
In a consummate Paradise within
The Veil, — O Lord, upon my soul bestow,
An earnest of that purity here below.

MY EPITAPH.

BELOW lies one whose name was traced in sand.
He died, not knowing what it was to live:
Died, while the first sweet consciousness of manhood
And maiden thought electrified his soul,
Faint beatings in the calyx of the rose.
Bewildered reader! pass without a sigh,
In a proud sorrow! There is life with God,
In other kingdom of a sweeter air;
In Eden every flower is blown: AMEN.

DAVID GRAY.

September 27, 1861.

The Bibelot

THE canvasses of the greater literary artists have to do with imaginary portraits of certain women, — Manon Lescaut, Fantine, Emma Bovary, — who remain forever in our hearts and memories as types for all time. But there are also shorter and simpler annuls like this which Richard Jefferies sets so poignantly before us in The Field-Play — *a cruel little masterpiece of English peasant life, "most mournful, . . . full of tears and pity."*

It is, indeed, a minor village tragedy[1] *without hope of a hereafter save the pessimistic implication that no hereafter* is *possible for Dolly. Not even De Quincey's story of Ann, drawn as it was from actual experience, conveys such sense of utter extinguishment of soul.*

Strange, is it not, that fine natures, — Morris, Hardy, Jefferies, — are so touched to the quick when brought to consider social problems like these? We all know how Morris burst into tears when the subject was mentioned though but cursorily before

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1 *For* A Village Tragedy *writ large read the tale with this title by Margaret L. Woods, London, 1889.*

him.[1] *Hardy reminds one of Lucretius who beholding no help for the misery of existence glorifies death. And for Jefferies, as if in like mockery of "Blind gods that cannot spare," came a vision of Summer, that surpassing pageant of a world wherein the toiler of the fields had no share save his labor, — glorious, surpassingly so, but beyond reach of the poor, the down-trodden, the rejected of the earth.*

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1 *See* Life of William Morris *by J. W. Mackail, Vol. II, p. 334.*

FOR AUGUST:
A LITTLE GARLAND
OF CELTIC VERSE.

THE FIELD-PLAY
By
RICHARD JEFFERIES.

APOLOGIA.

A jewelled tale, an antique historie
Plucked out of darkness and the dust of kings,
Or windy song the Northern sea-maid flings
Among the mountains from the brooding sea;
Such gifts my venturous Fancy promised thee
When to the sun he stretched his gauzy wings.
He promised thee, but other far he brings
As wingless now he wanders home to me.

Poor creeping Elf! He gathers what he can—
Herbs that each rash disdainful foot may reach,
Yet once who wore them understood the speech
Of bird and beast and all the song of Pan.
One hidden tongue they still have power to teach—
The obscure cry of toiling, suffering Man.

MARGARET L. WOODS.

THE FIELD-PLAY.

I.

UPTILL-A-THORN.

"Save the nightingale alone;
She, poor bird, as all forlorn,
Lean'd her breast uptill a thorn."
Passionate Pilgrim.

SHE pinned her torn dress with a thorn torn from the bushes through which she had scrambled to the hay-field. The gap from the lane was narrow, made more narrow by the rapid growth of summer; her rake caught in an ash-spray, and in releasing it she "ranted" the bosom of her print dress. So soon as she had got through she dropped her rake on the hay, searched for a long, nail-like thorn, and thrust it through, for the good-looking, careless hussy never had any provision of pins about her. Then, taking a June rose which pricked her finger, she put the flower by the "rant," or tear, and went to join the rest of the hay-makers. The blood welled up out of the scratch in the finger more freely than would have been supposed from so small a place. She put her lips to it to suck it away, as folk do in all quarters of the earth yet discovered, being

one of those instinctive things which come without teaching. A red dot of blood stained her soft white cheek, for, in brushing back her hair with her hand, she forgot the wounded finger. With red blood on her face, a thorn and a rose in her bosom, and a hurt on her hand, she reached the chorus of rakers.

The farmer and the sun are the leading actors, and the hay-makers are the chorus, who bear the burden of the play. Marching, each a step behind the other, and yet in a row, they presented a slanting front, and so crossed the field, turning the "wallows." At the hedge she took her place, the last in the row. There were five men and eight women; all flouted her. The men teased her for being late again at work; she said it was so far to come. The women jeered at her for tearing her dress — she couldn't get through a "thornin'" hedge right. There was only one thing she could do, and that was to "make a vool of zum veller" (make a fool of some fellow). Dolly did not take much notice, except that her nervous temperament showed slight excitement in the manner she used her rake, now turning the hay quickly,

now missing altogether, then catching the teeth of the rake in the buttercup-runners. The women did not fail to tell her how awkward she was. By-and-by Dolly bounced forward, and, with a flush on her cheek, took the place next to the men. They teased her too, you see, but there was no spiteful malice in their tongues. There are some natures which, naturally meek, if much condemned, defy that condemnation, and willingly give it ground of justification by open guilt. The women accused her of too free a carriage with the men; she replied by seeking their company in the broad glare of the summer day. They laughed loudly, joked, but welcomed her; they chatted with her gaily; they compelled her to sip from their ale as they paused by the hedge. By noon there was a high colour on her cheeks; the sun, the exercise, the badinage had brought it up.

So fair a complexion could not brown even in summer, exposed to the utmost heat. The beams indeed did heighten the hue of her cheeks a little, but it did not shade to brown. Her chin and neck were wholly untanned, white and soft, and the blue veins roamed at their will. Lips red, a little full

perhaps; teeth slightly prominent but white and gleamy as she smiled. Dark brown hair in no great abundance, always slipping out of its confinement and straggling, now on her forehead, and now on her shoulders, like wandering bines of bryony. The softest of brown eyes under long eyelashes; eyes that seemed to see everything in its gentlest aspect, that could see no harm anywhere. A ready smile on the face, and a smile in the form. Her shape yielded so easily at each movement that it seemed to smile as she walked. Her nose was the least pleasing feature — not delicate enough to fit with the complexion, and distinctly upturned, though not offensively. But it was not noticed; no one saw anything beyond the laughing lips, the laughing shape, the eyes that melted so near to tears. The torn dress, the straggling hair, the tattered shoes, the unmended stocking, the straw hat split, the mingled poverty and carelessness — perhaps rather dreaminess — disappeared when once you had met the full untroubled gaze of those beautiful eyes. Untroubled, that is, with any ulterior thought of evil or cunning; they were as open as the day, the day which you

can make your own for evil or good. So, too like the day, was she ready to the making.

No stability; now fast in motion; now slow; now by fits and starts; washing her face to-day, her hands to-morrow. Never going straight, even along the road; talking with the waggoner, helping a child to pick watercress, patting the shepherd's dog, finding a flower, and late every morning at the hay-field. It was so far to come, she said; no doubt it was, if these stoppings and doublings were counted in. No character whatever, no more than the wind; she was like a well-hung gate swinging to a touch; like water yielding to let a reed sway; like a singing-flame rising and falling to a word, and even to an altered tone of voice. A word pushed her this way; a word pushed her that. Always yielding, sweet, and gentle. Is not this the most seductive of all characters in women?

Had they left her alone, would it have been any different? Those bitter, coarse, feminine tongues which gave her the name of evil, and so led her to openly announce that, as she had the name, she would carry on the game. That is an old country saying,

"Bear the name, carry the game." If you have the name of a poacher, then poach; you will be no worse off, and you will have the pleasure of the poaching. It is a serious matter, indeed, to give any one a bad name, more especially a sensitive, nervous, beautiful girl.

Under the shady oaks at luncheon the men all petted her and flattered her in their rude way, which, rude as it was, had the advantage of admitting of no mistake. Two or three more men strolled up from other fields, luncheon in hand and eating as they came, merely to chat with her. One was a mower — a powerful fellow, big boned, big everywhere, and heavy fisted; his chest had been open since four o'clock that morning to the sun, and was tanned like his face. He took her in his mighty arms and kissed her before them all; not one dared move, for the weight of that bone-smashing fist was known. Big Mat drank, as all strong men do; he fought; beyond that there was nothing against him. He worked hard, and farmers are only too glad of a man who will work. He was rather a favourite with the master, and trusted. He kissed her twice,

and then went back to his work of mowing, which needs more strength than any other country labour — a mower is to a man what a dray-horse is to a horse.

They lingered long over the luncheon under the shady oaks, with the great blue tile of the sky overhead, and the sweet scent of hay around them. They lingered so long, that young Mr. Andrew came to start them again, and found Dolly's cheeks all a-glow. The heat and the laughter had warmed them; her cheeks burned, in contrast to her white, pure forehead — for her hat was off — and to the cool shade of the trees. She lingered yet a little longer chatting with Mr. Andrew — lingered a full half-hour — and when they parted, she had given him a rose from the hedge. Young Mr. Andrew was but half a farmer's son; he was destined for a merchant's office in town; he had been educated for it, and was only awaiting the promised opening. He was young, but no yokel; too knowing of town cunning and selfish hardness to entangle himself. Yet those soft brown eyes, that laughing shape; Andrew was very young and so was she, and the summer sun burned warm.

The blackbirds whistled the day away, and the swallows sought their nests under the eaves. The curved moon hung on the sky as the hunter's horn on the wall. Timid Wat — the hare — came ambling along the lane, and almost ran against two lovers in a recess of the bushes by an elm. Andrew, Andrew! these lips are too sweet for you; get you to your desk — that smiling shape, those shaded, soft brown eyes, let them alone. Be generous — do not awaken hopes you can never, never fulfil. The new-mown hay is scented yet more sweetly in the evening — of a summer's eve it is always too soon to go home.

The blackbirds whistled again, big Mat slew the grass from the rising to the going down of the sun — moon-daisies, sorrel, and buttercups lay in rows of swathe as he mowed. I wonder whether the man ever thought, as he reposed at noontide on a couch of grass under the hedge? Did he think that those immense muscles, that broad, rough-hewn plank of a chest of his, those vast bones encased in sinewy limbs — being flesh in its fulness — ought to have more of this earth than mere common men,

and still more than thin-faced people — mere people, not men — in black coats? Did he dimly claim the rights of strength in his mind, and arrogate to himself the prerogatives of arbitrary kings? Who knows what big processes of reasoning, dim and big, passed through his mind in the summer days? Did he conclude he had a right to take what others only asked or worked for?

The sweet scent of the new-mown hay disappeared, the hay became whiter, the ricks rose higher, and were topped and finished. Hourly the year grew drier and sultry, as the time of wheat-harvest approached. Sap of spring had dried away; dry stalk of high summer remained, browned with heat. Mr. Andrew (in the country the son is always called by his Christian name, with the prefix Master or Mr.) had been sent for to London to fill the promised lucrative berth. The reapers were in the corn — Dolly tying up; big Mat slashing at the yellow stalks. Why the man worked so hard no one could imagine, unless it was for pure physical pleasure of using those great muscles. Unless, indeed, a fire, as it were, was burning in his mind, and drove him to labour to

smother it, as they smother fires by beating them. Dolly was happier than ever — the gayest of the gay. She sang, she laughed, her white, gleaming teeth shone in the sunshine; it was as if she had some secret which enabled her to defy the taunts and cruel, shameless words hurled at her, like clods of earth, by the other women. Gay she was, as the brilliant poppies who, having the sun as their own, cared for nothing else.

Till suddenly, just before the close of harvest, Dolly and Mat were missing from the field. Of course their absence was slanderously connected, but there was no known ground for it. Big Mat was found intoxicated at the tavern, from which he never moved for a fortnight, spending in one long drain of drink the lump of money his mighty arms had torn from the sun in the burning hours of work. Dolly was ill at home; sometimes in her room, sometimes downstairs; but ill, shaky and weak — ague they called it. There were dark circles round her eyes, her chin drooped to her breast; she wrapped herself in a shawl in all the heat. It was some time before even the necessity of working brought her forth again,

and then her manner was hurried and furtive; she would begin trembling all of a minute, and her eyes filled quickly.

By degrees the autumn advanced, and the rooks followed the ploughman. Dolly gradually recovered something of her physical buoyancy; her former light-heartedness never returned. Sometimes an incident would cause a flash of the old gaiety, only for her to sink back into subdued quietness. The change was most noticeable in her eyes; soft and tender still, brown and velvety, there was a deep sadness in them — the longer she looked at you, the more it was visible. They seemed as if her spirit had suffered some great wrong; too great for redress, and that could only be borne in silence.

How beautiful are beautiful eyes! Not from one aspect only, as a picture is, where the light falls rightly on it — the painter's point of view — they vary to every and any aspect. The orb rolls to meet the changing circumstance, and is adjusted to all. But a little enquiry into the mechanism of the eyes will indicate how wondrously they are formed. Science has dispelled many illusions, broken

many dreams; but here, in the investigation of the eye, it has added to our marvelling interest. The eye is still like the work of a magician: it is physically divine. Besides the liquid flesh which delights the beholder, there is then the retina, the mysterious nerve which receives a thousand pictures on one surface and confuses none; and further, the mystery of the brain, which reproduces them at will, twenty years, yes, threescore years and ten, afterwards. Perhaps of all physical things, the eye is most beautiful, most divine.

Her eyes were still beautiful, but subdued and full of a great wrong. What that wrong was became apparent in the course of time. Dolly had to live with Mat, and, unhappily, not as his wife. Next harvest there was a child wrapped in a red shawl with her in the field, placed under the shocks while she worked. Her brother Bill talked and threatened — of what avail was it? The law gave no redress, and among men in these things, force is master still. There were none who could meet big Mat in fight.

Something seemed to burn in Mat like fire. Now he worked, and now he drank, but the drink which would have killed

another did him no injury. He grew and flourished upon it, more bone, more muscle, more of the savage nature of original man. But there was something within on fire. Was he not satisfied even yet? Did he arrogate yet further prerogatives of kings? — prerogatives which even kings claim no longer. One day, while in drink, his heavy fist descended — he forgot his might; he did not check it, like Ulysses in the battle with Irus — and Dolly fell.

When they lifted her up, one eye was gone.

It was utterly put out, organically destroyed; no skill, no money, no loving care could restore it. The soft, brown velvet, the laugh, the tear gone for ever. The divine eye was broken — battered as a stone might be. The exquisite structure which reflected the trees and flowers, and took to itself the colour of the summer sky, was shapeless.

In the second year, Mr. Andrew came down, and one day met her in the village. He did not know her. The stoop, the dress which clothed, but responded to no curve, the sunken breast, and the sightless eye, how

should he recognize these? This ragged, plain, this ugly, repellent creature — he did not know her. She spoke; Mr. Andrew hastily fumbled in his pocket, fetched out half a crown, gave it, and passed on quickly. How fortunate that he had not entangled himself!

Meantime, Mat drank and worked harder than ever, and became more morose, so that no one dared cross him, yet as a worker he was trusted by the farmer. Whatever it was, the fire in him burned deeper, and to the very quick. The poppies came and went once more, the harvest moon rose yellow and ruddy, all the joy of the year proceeded, but Dolly was like a violet over which a waggon-wheel had rolled. The thorn had gone deep into her bosom.

II.

RURAL DYNAMITE.

In the cold North men eat bread of fir-bark; in our own fields the mouse, if pressed for food in winter, will gnaw the bark of sapling trees. Frost sharpens the teeth like a file, and hunger is keener than frost. If any one used to more fertile scenes had walked across the barren meads Mr. Roberts rented as the summer declined, he would have said that a living could only be gained from them as the mouse gains it in frost-time. By sharp-set nibbling and paring; by the keenest frost-bitten meanness of living; by scraping a little bit here, and saving another trifle yonder, a farmer might possibly get through the year. At the end of each year he would be rather worse off than before, descending a step annually. He must nibble like a frost-driven mouse to merely exist. So poor was the soil, that the clay came to the surface, and in wet weather a slip of the foot exposed it — the heel cut through the veneer of turf into the cold,

dead, moist clay. Nothing grew but rushes. Every time a horse moved over the marshy land his hoof left deep holes which never again filled up, but remained the year through, now puddles, full of rain water, and now dry holes. The rain made the ground a swamp; the sun cracked it as it does paint. Who could pay rent for such a place?—for rushes, flags, and water.

Yet it was said, with whisper and nod, that the tenant, Mr. Roberts, was a warm man as warm men go after several years of bad seasons, falling prices, and troubles of all kinds. For one thing, he hopped, and it is noted among country folk, that, if a man hops, he generally accumulates money. Mr. Roberts hopped, or rather dragged his legs from rheumatics contracted in thirty years' hardest of hard labour on that thankless farm. Never did any man labour so continually as he, from the earliest winter dawn when the blackbird, with puffed feathers, still tried to slumber in the thornbush, but could not for cold, on till the latest summer eve, after the white barn owl had passed round the fir copse. Both with his hands, and with his eyes, now working, now watch-

ing, the man ceased not, and such was his dogged pertinacity that, like the mouse, he won a living. He did more, he saved. At what price? At the price of a fireless life: I mean without cheer, by denial of everything which renders human life superior to that of the rabbit in his burrow. No wife, no children, no niece, or any woman to see to his comforts; no comfort and no pleasure; a bare house and rheumatism. Bill, his principal labourer, Dolly's brother, slept with him in the same bed, master and man, a custom common in old times, long since generally disused.

Yet Mr. Roberts was not without some humanism, if such a word may be used; certainly he never gave away a penny, but as certainly he cheated no man. He was upright in conduct, and not unpleasant in manner. He could not have been utterly crabbed for this one labourer, Bill, to stay with him five and twenty years. This was the six and twentieth year they had dwelt there together in the gaunt, grey lonely house, with woods around them, isolated from the world, and without a hearth. A hearth is no hearth unless a woman sit by it.

This six and twentieth year, the season then just ended, had been the worst of the series; rain had spoiled the hay, increased the payment of wages by lengthening the time of hay-making; ruin, he declared, stared him in the face; he supposed at last he must leave the tenancy. And now the harvest was done, the ricks thatched with flags from the marsh (to save straw), the partridges were dispersed, the sportsmen having broken up the coveys, the black swifts had departed — they built every year in the grey stone slates on the lonely house — and nothing was left to be done but to tend the cattle morning and evening, to reflect on the losses, and to talk ceaselessly of the new terror which hung over the whole district.

It was rick-burning. Probably, gentlemen in London, who "sit at home at ease," imagine rick-burning a thing of the past, impossible since insurance robbed the incendiary of his sting, unheard of and extinct. Nothing of the kind. That it is not general is true, still to this day it breaks out in places, and rages with vehemence, placing the country side under a reign of terror. The thing seems inexplicable, but it is a fact;

the burning of ricks and farm-sheds every now and then, in certain localities, reaches the dimensions of a public disaster.

One night from the garret window, Mr. Roberts, and Bill, his man, counted five fires visible at once. One was in full sight, not a mile distant, two behind the wood, above which rose the red glow, the other two dimly illumined the horizon on the left like a rising moon. While they watched in the dark garret the rats scampered behind them, and a white barn owl floated silently by. They counted up fourteen fires that had taken place since the beginning of the month, and now there were five together. Mr. Roberts did not sleep that night. Being so near the woods and preserves it was part of the understanding that he should not keep a gun — he took a stout staff, and went out to his hayricks, and there stayed till daylight. By ten o'clock he was trudging into the town; his mind had been half-crazed with anxiety for his ricks; he was not insured, he had never insured, just to save the few shillings it cost, such was the nibbling by which he lived. He had struggled hard and kept the secret to himself — of the non-

insurance — he foresaw that if known he should immediately suffer. But at the town the insurance agent demurred to issue a policy. The losses had been so heavy, there was no knowing how much farther the loss might extend, for not the slightest trace of the incendiary had yet been discovered, notwithstanding the reward offered, and this was a new policy. Had it been to add to an old one, had Mr. Roberts insured in previous years, it would have been different. He could not do it on his own responsibility, he must communicate with the head office; most likely they would do it, but he must have their authority. By return of post he should know. Mr. Roberts trudged home again, with the misery of two more nights confronting him; two more nights of exposure to the chance of utter ruin. If those ricks were burned, the savings — the nibblings of his life — were gone. This intense, frost-bitten economy, by which alone he had been able to prosper, now threatened to overwhelm him with destruction.

There is nothing that burns so resolutely as a hayrick; nothing that catches fire so easily. Children are playing with matches;

one holds the ignited match till it scorches the fingers, and then drops it. The expiring flame touches three blades of dry grass, of hay fallen from the rick, these flare immediately; the flame runs along like a train of gunpowder, rushes up the side of the rick, singeing it as a horse's coat is singed, takes the straw of the thatch which blackens into a hole, cuts its way through, the draught lifts it up the slope of the thatch, and in five minutes the rick is on fire irrecoverably. Unless beaten out at the first start, it is certain to go on. A spark from a pipe, dropped from the mouth of a sleeping man, will do it. Once well alight, and the engines may come at full speed, one five miles, one eight, two ten; they may pump the pond dry, and lay hose to the distant brook — it is in vain. The spread of the flames may be arrested, but not all the water that can be thrown will put out the rick. The outside of the rick where the water strikes it turns black, and dense smoke arises, but the inside core continues to burn till the last piece is charred. All that can be done is to hastily cut away that side of the rick — if any remains — yet untouched, and carry it bodily

away. A hayrick will burn for hours, one huge mass of concentrated, glowing, solid fire, not much flame, but glowing coals, so that the farmer may fully understand, may watch and study and fully comprehend the extent of his loss. It burns itself from a square to a dome, and the red dome grows gradually smaller till its lowest layer of ashes strews the ground. It burns itself as it were in blocks: the rick was really homogeneous; it looks while aglow as if it had been constructed of large bricks or blocks of hay. These now blackened blocks dry and crumble one by one till the dome sinks. Under foot the earth is heated, so intense is the fire; no one can approach, even on the windward side, within a pole's length. A widening stream of dense white smoke flows away upwards, flecked with great sparks, blackening the elms, and carrying flakes of burning hay over outhouses, sheds, and farmsteads. Thus from the clouds, as it seems, drops further destruction. Nothing in the line of the wind is safe. Fine impalpable ashes drift and fall like rain half a mile away. Sometimes they remain suspended in the air for hours, and come down presently when

the fire is out, like volcanic dust drifting from the crater. This dust lies soft and silky on the hand. By the burning rick, the air rushing to the furnace roars aloud, coming so swiftly as to be cold; on one side intense heat, on the other cold wind. The pump, pump, swing, swing of the manual engines; the quick, short pant of the steam fire-engine; the stream and hiss of the water; shouts and answers; gleaming brass helmets; frightened birds; crowds of white faces, whose frames are in shadow; a red glow on the black, wet mud of the empty pond; rosy light on the walls of the homestead, crossed with vast magnified shadows; windows glistening; men dragging sail-like tarpaulins and rick cloths to cover the sheds; constables upright and quiet, but watchful, standing at intervals to keep order; if by day, the strangest mixture of perfect calm and heated anxiety, the smoke bluish, the floating flakes visible as black specks, the flames tawny, pigeons fluttering round, cows grazing in idol-like indifference to human fears. Ultimately, rows of flattened and roughly circular layers of blackened ashes, whose traces remain for months.

This is dynamite in the hands of the village ruffian.

This hay, or wheat, or barley, not only represents money; it represents the work of an entire year, the sunshine of a whole summer; it is the outcome of man's thought and patient labour, and it is the food of the helpless cattle. Besides the hay, there often go with it buildings, implements, waggons, and occasionally horses are suffocated. Once now and then the farmstead goes.

Now, has not the farmer, even if covered by insurance, reason good to dread this horrible incendiarism? It is a blow at his moral existence as well as at his pecuniary interests. Hardened indeed must be that heart that could look at the old familiar scene, blackened, fire-spilt, trodden, and blotted, without an inward desolation. Boxes and barrels of merchandise in warehouses can be replaced, but money does not replace the growth of nature.

Hence the brutality of it — the blow at a man's heart. His hay, his wheat, his cattle, are to a farmer part of his life; coin will not replace them. Nor does the incendiary care if the man himself, his house, home, and all

perish at the same time. It is dynamite in despite of insurance. The new system of silos — burying the grass when cut at once in its green state, in artificial caves — may much reduce the risk of fire if it comes into general use.

These fire invasions almost always come in the form of an epidemic; not one but three, five, ten, fifteen fires follow in quick succession. Sometimes they last through an entire winter, though often known to take place in summer, directly after harvest.

Rarely does detection happen; to this day half these incendiary fires are never followed by punishment. Yet it is noted that they generally occur within a certain radius; they are all within six, or seven, or eight miles, being about the distance that a man or two bent on evil could compass in the night time. But it is not always night; numerous fires are started in broad daylight. Stress of winter weather, little food, and clothing, and less fuel at home have been put forward as causes of a chill desperation, ending in crime. On the contrary, these fires frequently occur when labourers' pockets are full, just after they have received their harvest wages.

Bread is not at famine prices; hard masters are not specially selected for the gratification of spite; good masters suffer equally. What then is the cause?

There is none but that bitter, bitter feeling which I venture to call the dynamite disposition, and which is found in every part of the civilized world; in Germany, Italy, France, and our own mildly ruled England. A brooding, morose, concentrated hatred of those who possess any kind of substance or comfort; landlord, farmer, every one. An unsparing vendetta, a merciless shark-like thirst of destructive vengeance; a monomania of battering, smashing, crushing, such as seizes the Lancashire weaver, who kicks his woman's brains out without any special reason for dislike, mingled with and made more terrible by this unchangeable hostility to property and those who own it. No creed, no high moral hopes of the rights of man and social regeneration, no true *sans culottism* even, nothing at all but set teeth and inflated nostrils; blow up, burn, smash, annihilate! A disposition or character which is not imaginary but a fact, as proved abundantly by the placing of rails and iron chairs

on lines to upset trains, by the dynamite explosions at Government offices, railway stations, and even at newspaper offices, the sending of letters filled with explosives, firing dynamite in trout streams just to destroy the harmless fish; a character which in the country has hitherto manifested itself in the burning of ricks and farm buildings. Science is always putting fresh power into the hands of this class. In cities they have partly awakened to the power of knowledge; in the country they still use the match. If any one thinks that there is no danger in England because there are no deep-seated causes of discontent, such as foreign rule, oppressive enactments, or conscription, I can assure him that he is wofully mistaken. This class needs no cause at all; prosperity cannot allay its hatred, and adversity does not weaken it. It is certainly unwise to the last degree to provoke this demon, to control which as yet no means have been found. You cannot arrest the invisible; you cannot pour Martini-Henry bullets into a phantom. How are you going to capture people who blow themselves into atoms in order to shatter the frame of a Czar?

In its dealings with the lower class this generation is certainly far from wise. Never was the distinction so sharp between the poor — the sullen poor who stand scornful and desperate at the street corners — and the well-to-do. The contrast now extends to every one who can afford a black coat. It is not confined to the millionaire. The contrast is with every black coat. Those who only see the drawing-room side of society, those who move, too, in the well-oiled atmosphere of commercial offices, are quite ignorant of the savage animosity which watches them to and fro the office or the drawing-room from the street corner. Question it is if any mediæval soldiery bursting abroad in Sinigaglia were so brutal as is the street rough, that blot and hideous product of modern civilization. How easy it is to point to the sobriety and the good sense of the working class and smile in assumed complacency! What have the sober mass of the working class to do with it? No more than you or I, or the Rothschilds, or dukes of blood royal. There the thing is, and it requires no great sagacity to see that the present mode of dealing with it is a failure and likely

to be worse. If you have gunpowder, you should not put it under hydraulic pressure. You should not stir it up and hold matches to it to see if it is there. That is what prosecutions and imprisonments on charges of atheism and so on do. It is stirring up the powder and trying it with a match.

Nor should you put it under hydraulic pressure, which is now being done all over the country, under the new laws which force every wretch who enters a workhouse for a night's shelter to stay there two nights; under the cold-blooded cruelty which, in the guise of science, takes the miserable quarter of a pint of ale from the lips of the palsied and decrepit inmates; which puts the imbecile — even the guiltless imbecile — on what is practically bread and water. Words fail me to express the cruelty and inhumanity of this crazed legislation.

Sometimes we see a complacent paragraph in the papers, penned by an official doubtless, congratulating the public that the number relieved under the new regulations has dropped from, say, six hundred to a hundred and fifty. And what, oh blindest of the blind, do you imagine has become of the remaining

four hundred and fifty? Has your precious folly extinguished them? Are they dead? No, indeed. All over the country, hydraulic pressure, in the name of science, progress, temperance, and similar perverted things, is being put on the gunpowder — or the dynamite, if you like — of society. Every now and then some individual member of the Army of Wretches turns and becomes the Devil of modern civilization. Modern civilization has put out the spiritual Devil and produced the Demon of Dynamite. Let me raise a voice, in pleading for more humane treatment of the poor — the only way, believe me, by which society can narrow down and confine the operations of this new Devil. A human being is not a dog, yet is treated worse than a dog.

Force these human dogs to learn to read with empty stomachs — stomachs craving for a piece of bread while education is crammed into them. In manhood, if unfortunate, set them to break stones. If imbecility supervene give them bread and water. In helpless age give them the cup of cold water. This is the way to breed dynamite. And then at the other end of the scale let your Thames

Embankment Boulevard be the domain of the street rough; let your Islington streets be swept by bands of brutes; let the well dressed be afraid to venture anywhere unless in the glare of gas and electric light! Manufacture it in one district, and give it free scope and play in another. Yet never was there an age in which the mass of society, from the titled to the cottager, was so full of real and true humanity, so ready to start forward to help, so imbued with the highest sentiments. The wrong is done in official circles. No steel-clad baron of Norman days, no ruthless red-stockinged cardinal, with the Bastile in one hand and the tumbril in the other, ever ruled with so total an absence of Heart as the modern "official," the Tyrants of the nineteenth century; whose rods are hobbies in the name of science miscalled, in the name of temperance perverted, in the name of progress backwards, in the name of education without food. It is time that the common sense of society at large rose in revolution against it. Meantime dynamite.

This is a long digression: suppose while you have been reading it that Mr. Roberts

has passed one of the two terrible nights, his faithful Bill at one end of the rickyard and himself at the other. The second night they took up their positions in the same manner as soon as it was dark. There was no moon, and the sky was overcast with those stationary clouds which often precede a great storm, so that the darkness was marked, and after they had parted a step or two they lost sight of each other. Worn with long wakefulness, and hard labour during the day, they both dropped asleep at their posts. Mr. Roberts awoke from the dead vacancy of sleep to the sensation of a flash of light crossing his eyelids, and to catch a glimpse of a man's neck with a red necktie illuminated by flame like a Rembrandt head in the centre of shadow. He leaped forward literally yelling — the incendiary he wholly forgot — his rick! his rick! He beat the side of the rick with his stick, and as it had but just caught he beat the flame out. Then he dropped senseless on the ground. Bill, awakened by Roberts' awful yell or shriek of excitement, started to his feet, heard a man rushing by in the darkness, and hurled his heavy stick in that direction. By the thud

which followed and a curse, he knew it had hit the object, but not with sufficient force to bring the scoundrel down. The fellow escaped; Bill went to his master and lifted him up; how he got Roberts home he did not know, but it was hours before Roberts could speak. Towards sunrise he recovered, and would go immediately to assure himself that the ricks were safe. Then they found a man's hat — Bill's stick had knocked it off — and by that hat and the red necktie the incendiary was brought to justice. The hat was big Mat's; he always wore a red necktie.

Big Mat made no defence; he was simply stolidly indifferent to the whole proceedings. The only statement he made was that he had not fired four of the ricks, and he did not know who had done so. Example is contagious; some one had followed the dynamite lead, detection never took place, but the fires ceased. Mat, of course, went for the longest period of penal servitude the law allotted.

I should say that he did not himself know why he did it. That intense, brooding moroseness, that wormwood hatred, does not often understand itself. So much the more

dangerous is it; no argument, no softening influence can reach it.

Faithful Bill, who had served Mr. Roberts almost all his life, and who probably would have served him till the end, received a money reward from the insurance office for his share in detecting the incendiary. This reward ruined him — killed him. Golden sovereigns in his pocket destroyed him. He went on the drink; he drank, and was enticed to drink, till in six weeks he died in the infirmary of the workhouse.

Mat being in the convict prison, and Dolly near to another confinement, she could not support herself; she was driven to the same workhouse in which her brother had but just died. I am not sure, but believe that pseudo-science, the Torturer of these days, denied her the least drop of alcohol during her travail. If it did permit one drop, then was the Torturer false to his creed. Dolly survived, but utterly broken, hollow-chested, a workhouse fixture. Still, so long as she could stand she had to wash in the laundry; weak as she was, they weakened her still farther with steam and heat, and labour. Washing is hard work for those who

enjoy health and vigour. To a girl, broken in heart and body, it is a slow destroyer. Heat relaxes all the fibres; Dolly's required bracing. Steam will soften wood and enable the artificer to bend it to any shape. Dolly's chest became yet more hollow; her cheek-bones prominent; she bent to the steam. This was the girl who had lingered in the lane to help the boy pick watercress, to gather a flower, to listen to a thrush, to bask in the sunshine. Open air and green fields were to her life itself. Heart miseries are always better borne in the open air. How just, how truly scientific, to shut her in a steaming washhouse!

The workhouse was situated in a lovely spot, on the lowest slope of hills, hills covered afar with woods. Meads at hand, corn fields farther away, then green slopes over which broad cloud-shadows glided slowly. The larks sang in spring, in summer the wheat was golden, in autumn the distant woods were brown and red and yellow. Had you spent your youth in those fields, had your little drama of life been enacted in them, do you not think that you would like at least to gaze out at them from the win-

dows of your prison? It was observed that the miserable wretches were always looking out of the windows in this direction. The windows on that side were accordingly built up and bricked in that they might not look out.

The Bibelot

WHAT Matthew Arnold in his famous essay of thirty years ago[1] *so aptly called the "Celtic nearness to Nature and her secret," "that sheer, inimitable Celtic note," and yet again, "the powers of natural magic in Celtic poetry," has found at last a development which, were he living, would surely be appreciated and justly rated by him at its full value.*

The affinity to William Blake may be doubted or denied: for us in all that is deepest and most authentic in this modern revival,—renascence if you will,—his shadowy but perceptible touch is beyond question. Opinions, however, should not be carried to extremes. If we feel the influence of Blake in the work of Mr. W. B. Yeats,—his song from The Land of Heart's Desire *is one of the loveliest lyrics yet come out of Ireland—it certainly does not detract from but rather augments his inherent merit. Of imitation there is none.*

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1 On the Study of Celtic Literature, (*London, 1867.*) *Reprinted in a single volume along with the essay* On Translating Homer, (*Macmillan & Co., London and New York, 1893*). *Nor should Renan's essay,* The Poetry of the Celtic Races, *be overlooked.*

Quite beside him we think Mr. George William Russell, ("A. E.") *and Mr. Lionel Johnson, when at their best, must be placed. Concerning Moira O'Neill, Dora Sigerson and Nora Hopper we may affirm that each stands as poet in her own right; the specimens of their verse need no further or better comment.*

It would prove an absurdity to include every verse-writer in this re-awakening of the Celtic muse, simply because of an alleged trace of Irish, Welsh or Scottish blood in their veins![2] *Surely Coleridge was possessed by a "natural magic"; surely too, the Ettrick Shepherd struck the same thin elfin note of music in* Kilmeny.[3]

But in the space at our command it is impossible to do more at present than print some score or so of preferences of our own, briefly indicating the sources of such exquisitely wrought fabrics.[4]

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2 *See* Lyra Celtica, (*Edinburgh, 1896,*) *where these conclusions are pushed to a distressing length. See also* A Book of Irish Verse *edited by W. B. Yeats* (*London, 1900*) *where they are not!*

3 *Those who would come into touch with the sanest presentation of the subject of modern Celtic literature should procure* A Divine Adventure; Iona; By Sundown Shores; Studies in Spiritual History, *by Fiona Macleod. 1 vol. 8vo.* (*London, 1900.*)

4 *Poems by W. B. Yeats,* (*1895*)*; The Wind Among the Reeds by W. B. Yeats,* (*1899*)*, Poems by*

Suffice it then if we acquire a fresh outlook by contact with these outcroppings of poetry more directly in touch with Nature, and of more imaginative beauty than any other produced in the world to-day.

> *"There is a land of Dream,*
> *I have trodden its golden ways,*
> *I have seen its amber light. . . ."*

Lionel Johnson, (1895); Homeward Songs by the Way by "A. E.," (1895); Ballads and Poems by Dora Sigerson, (1899); Songs of the Glens of Antrim by Moira O'Neill, (1900); Songs of the Morning, by Nora Hopper (1900).

FOR SEPTEMBER:

SVEND AND HIS BRETHREN

A Tale

BY WILLIAM MORRIS.

"To see the fairness of the body passing,
To see the beauty wither, the sweet colour
Fade, the coming of the wintry lines
Upon pale faces chilled with idle longing,
The slow subsidence of the tides of living.
To feel all this, and know the desolate sorrow,
Of the pale place of all defeated dreams,
And to cry out with aching lips, and vainly,
And to cry out with aching heart, and vainly,
And to cry out with aching brain, and vainly,
And to cry out with aching soul, and vainly,
To cry, cry, cry, with passionate heartbreak, sobbing
To the dim wondrous shape of Love Retreating."

FIONA MACLEOD.

Lovely and loved, O passionate land!
Dear Celtic land, unconquered still!
Thy mountain strength prevails:
Thy winds have all their will.

They have no care for meaner things;
They have no scorn for brooding dreams:
A spirit in them sings,
A light about them beams.

LIONEL JOHNSON.

"Intimate natural vision; a swift emotion that is sometimes a spiritual ecstasy, but sometimes is also a mere intoxication of the senses; a peculiar sensitiveness to the beauty of what is remote and solitary; a rapt pleasure in what is ancient and in the contemplation of what holds an inevitable melancholy; a visionary passion for beauty which is of the immortal things, beyond the temporal beauty of what is mutable and mortal. . . .

There is a beauty in the Homeric hymns that I do not find in the most beautiful of Celtic chants; none could cull from the gardens of the Gael what in the Greek anthology has been gathered out of time to be everlasting; not even the love and passion of the stories of the Celtic mythology surpass the love and passion of stories of the Hellenic mythology. The romance that of old flowered among the Gaelic hills flowered also in English meads, by Danish shores, amid Teuton woods and plains. I think Catullus sang more exquisitely than Bailé Honeymouth, and that Theocritus loved nature not less than Oisin. . . . That there is in the Celtic peoples an emotionalism peculiar in kind and, perhaps, in intensity, is not to be denied; that a love of nature is characteristic is true, but differing only, if at all, in certain intimacies of approach; that visionariness is relatively so common as to be typical, is obvious. But there is English emotion, English love of nature, English visionariness, as there is Dutch, or French, or German, or Russian, or Hindu. There is no nationality in these things save in the accident of contour and colour."

FIONA MACLEOD.

CELTIC SPEECH.

NEVER forgetful silence fall on thee,
Nor younger voices overtake thee,
Nor echoes from thine ancient hills forsake thee;
Old music heard by Mona of the sea:
And where with moving melodies there break thee
Pastoral Conway, venerable Dee.

Like music lives, nor may that music die,
Still in the far, fair Gaelic places:
The speech, so wistful with its kindly graces,
Holy Croagh Patrick knows, and holy Hy:
The speech, that wakes the soul in withered faces,
And wakes remembrance of great things gone by.

Like music by the desolate Land's End
Mournful forgetfulness hath broken:
No more words kindred to the winds are spoken,
Where upon iron cliffs whole seas expend
That strength, whereof the unalterable token
Remains wild music, even to the world's end.

LIONEL JOHNSON.

TO MORFYDD.

A voice on the winds,
A voice by the waters,
Wanders and cries:

Oh! what are the winds?
And what are the waters?
Mine are your eyes!

Western the winds are,
And western the waters,
Where the light lies:

Oh! what are the winds?
And what are the waters?
Mine are your eyes!

Cold, cold, grow the winds,
And wild grow the waters,
Where the sun dies:

Oh! what are the winds?
And what are the waters?
Mine are your eyes!

And down the night winds,
And down the night waters,
The music flies:

Oh! what are the winds?
And what are the waters?
Cold be the winds,
And wild be the waters,
So mine be your eyes!

LIONEL JOHNSON.

SONG FROM THE LAND OF HEART'S DESIRE.

THE wind blows out of the gates of the day,
The wind blows over the lonely of heart,
And the lonely of heart is withered away,
While the faeries dance in a place apart,
Shaking their milk-white feet in a ring,
Tossing their milk-white arms in the air;
For they hear the wind laugh and murmur and sing
Of a land where even the old are fair,
And even the wise are merry of tongue;
But I heard a reed of Coolaney say,
'When the wind has laughed and murmured and sung,
'The lonely of heart must wither away.'

W. B. YEATS.

THE LAKE ISLE OF INNISFREE.

I WILL arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honey bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;
Their midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements gray,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

W. B. YEATS.

AEDH TELLS OF THE ROSE IN HIS HEART.

All things uncomely and broken, all things worn
out and old,
The cry of a child by the roadway, the creak of a
lumbering cart,
The heavy steps of the ploughman, splashing the
wintry mould,
Are wronging your image that blossoms a rose in the
deeps of my heart.

The wrong of unshapely things is a wrong too great to
be told;
I hunger to build them anew and sit on a green knoll
apart,
With the earth and the sky and the water, remade,
like a casket of gold
For my dreams of your image that blossoms a rose in
the deeps of my heart.

W. B. YEATS.

INTO THE TWILIGHT.

Out-worn heart, in a time out-worn,
Come clear of the nets of wrong and right;
Laugh heart again in the gray twilight,
Sigh, heart, again in the dew of the morn.

Your mother Erie is always young,
Dew ever shining and twilight gray;
Though hope fall from you and love decay,
Burning in fires of a slanderous tongue.

Come, heart, where hill is heaped upon hill:
For there the mystical brotherhood
Of sun and moon and hollow and wood
And river and stream work out their will;

And God stands winding His lonely horn,
And time and the world are ever in flight;
And love is less kind than the gray twilight,
And hope is less dear than the dew of the morn.

W. B. YEATS.

A FAERY SONG.

Sung by the faeries over the outlaw Michael Dwyer and his bride, who had escaped into the mountains.

We who are old, old and gay,
O so old!
Thousands of years, thousands of years,
If all were told:

Give to these children, new from the world,
Silence and love;
And the long dew-dropping hours of the night,
And the stars above:

Give to these children, new from the world,
Rest far from men.
Is anything better, anything better?
Tell it us then:

Us who are old, old and gay:
O so old!
Thousands of years, thousands of years,
If all were told.

W. B. YEATS.

DOWN BY THE SALLEY GARDENS.[1]

DOWN by the salley gardens my love and I did meet;
She passed the salley gardens with little snow-white feet.
She bid me take love easy, as the leaves grow on the tree;
But I, being young and foolish, with her would not agree.

In a field by the river my love and I did stand,
And on my leaning shoulder she laid her snow-white hand.
She bid me take life easy, as the grass grows on the weirs;
But I was young and foolish, and now am full of tears.

W. B. YEATS.

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1 *Down by the Salley Gardens.*—An extension of three lines sung to me by an old woman at Ballisodare.

TO THE ROSE UPON THE ROOD OF TIME.

RED Rose, proud Rose, sad Rose of all my days!
Come near me, while I sing the ancient ways:
Cuhoollin battling with the bitter tide;
The Druid, gray, wood nurtured, quiet-eyed,
Who cast round Fergus dreams, and ruin untold;
And thine own sadness, whereof stars, grown old
In dancing silver sandalled on the sea,
Sing in their high and lonely melody.
Come near, that no more blinded by man's fate,
I find under the boughs of love and hate,
In all poor foolish things that live a day,
Eternal Beauty wandering on her way.

Come near, come near, come near — Ah, leave me still
A little space for the rose-breath to fill!
Lest I no more hear common things that crave;
The weak worm hiding down in its small cave,
The field-mouse running by me in the grass,
And heavy mortal hopes that toil and pass;
But seek alone to hear the strange things said
By God to the bright hearts of those long dead,
And learn to chaunt a tongue, men do not know.
Come near — I would, before my time to go,
Sing of old Eri and the ancient ways:
Red Rose, proud Rose, sad Rose of all my days!

W. B. YEATS.

"BEAUTY'S A FLOWER."

YOUTH'S for an hour,
Beauty's a flower,
But love is the jewel that wins the world.

Youth's for an hour, an' the taste o' life is sweet,
Ailes was a girl that stepped on two bare feet;
In all my days I never seen the one as fair as she,
I'd have lost my life for Ailes, an' she never cared for me.

Beauty's a flower, an' the days o' life are long,
There' little knowin' who may live to sing another song
For Ailes was the fairest, but another is my wife,
An' Mary — God be good to her! — is all I love in life.

Youth's for an hour,
Beauty's a flower,
But love is the jewel that wins the world.

MOIRA O'NEILL.

SEA WRACK.

THE wrack was dark an' shiny where it floated in the sea,
There was no one in the brown boat but only him an' me;
Him to cut the sea wrack, me to mind the boat,
An' not a word between us the hours we were afloat.
The wet wrack,
The sea wrack,
The wrack was strong to cut.

We laid it on the grey rocks to wither in the sun,
An' what should call my lad then, to sail from Cushendun?
With a low moon, a full tide, a swell upon the deep,
Him to sail the old boat, me to fall asleep.
The dry wrack,
The sea wrack,
The wrack was dead so soon.

There' a fire low upon the rocks to burn the wrack to kelp,
There' a boat gone down upon the Moyle, an' sorra one to help!
Him beneath the salt sea, me upon the shore,
By sunlight or moonlight we'll lift the wrack no more.
The dark wrack,
The sea wrack,
The wrack may drift ashore.

MOIRA O'NEILL.

A BROKEN SONG.

'WHERE *am I from?*' From the green hills of Erin.
'*Have I no song then?*' My songs are all sung.
'*What o' my love?*' 'Tis alone I am farin'.
Old grows my heart, an' my voice yet is young.

'*If she was tall?*' Like a king's own daughter.
'*If she was fair?*' Like a mornin' o' May.
When she'd come laughin' 'twas the runnin' wather,
When she'd come blushin' 'twas the break o' day.

'*Where did she dwell?*' Where one'st I had my dwellin'.
'*Who loved her best?*' There' no one now will know.
'*Where is she gone?*' Och, why would I be tellin'!
Where she is gone there I can never go.

MOIRA O'NEILL.

OVER here in England I'm helpin' wi' the hay,
An' I wisht I was in Ireland the livelong day;
Weary on the English hay, an' sorra take the wheat!
Och! Corrymeela an' the blue sky over it.

There' a deep dumb river flowin' by beyont the heavy trees,
This livin' air is moithered wi' the bummin' o' the bees;
I wisht I'd hear the Claddagh burn go runnin' through the heat
Past Corrymeela, wi' the blue sky over it.

The people that's in England is richer nor the Jews,
There' not the smallest young gossoon but thravels in his shoes!
I'd give the pipe between me teeth to see a barefut child,
Och! Corrymeela an' the low south wind.

Here's hands so full o' money an' hearts so full o' care,
By the luck o' love! I'd still go light for all I did go bare.
"God save ye, *colleen dhas*," I said: the girl she thought me wild.
Far Corrymeela, an' the low south wind.

D'ye mind me now, the song at night is mortial hard
to raise,
The girls are heavy goin' here, the boys are ill to
plase;
When one'st I'm out this workin' hive, 'tis I'll be back
again —
Ay, Corrymeela, in the same soft rain.

The puff o' smoke from one ould roof before an
English town!
For a *shaugh* wid Andy Feelan here I'd give a silver
crown,
For a curl o' hair like Mollie's ye'll ask the like in vain,
Sweet Corrymeela, and the same soft rain.

MOIRA O'NEILL.

'I HAVE BEEN TO HY-BRASAIL.'[1]

I HAVE been to Hy-Brasail,
And the Land of Youth have seen,
Much laughter have I heard there,
And birds amongst the green.

Many have I met there,
But no one ever old,
Yet I have left Hy-Brasail
Before my time was told.

Love have I known, too,
As I shall meet no more;
Lost is the magic island,
And I cannot find the shore.

Since I have left Hy-Brasail,
Age has encompassed me,
She plucks me by the shoulder
And will not let me be.

Her face is grey and mournful,
Her hand is hard and cold,
Yet I have left Hy-Brasail
Before my time was told.

DORA SIGERSON.

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1 One of the Enchanted Isles, sometimes seen in the western seas from the shores of Ireland.

A FAIRY PRINCE.

PRINCE Charming, when the wizard's wand
Had wrecked for aye my fairyland,
Had rased my castles to the earth,
And killed my child's heart with his mirth;
Then weeds grew rank where flowers had been,
And slow snakes flashed their length between.

Prince Charming, when the darkness came,
With many tears I called your name,
And 'Give me back my fairyland!'
You took me by the willing hand
Ere day had lit the dawn's pale flame;
You left me when the darkness came.

Prince Charming, spite of wizard's wand,
You said you'd find my fairyland.
I open eyes too sad for tears,
Nought but an open grave appears.

DORA SIGERSON.

THE WIND ON THE HILLS.

Go not to the hills of Erin
When the night winds are about,
Put up your bar and shutter,
And so keep the danger out.

For the good-folk whirl within it,
And they pull you by the hand,
And they push you on the shoulder,
Till you move to their command.

And lo! you have forgotten
What you have known of tears,
And you will not remember
That the world goes full of years;

A year there is a lifetime,
And a second but a day,
And an older world will meet you
Each morn you come away.

Your wife grows old with weeping,
And your children one by one
Grow grey with nights of watching,
Before your dance is done.

And it will chance some morning
You will come home no more,
Your wife sees but a withered leaf
In the wind about the door.

And your children will inherit
The unrest of the wind,
They shall seek some face elusive,
And some land they never find.

When the wind is loud, they sighing
Go with hearts unsatisfied,
For some joy beyond remembrance,
For some memory denied.

And all your children's children,
They cannot sleep or rest,
When the wind is out in Erin
And the sun is in the West.

DORA SIGERSON.

A DANCING-GIRL'S EPITAPH.

HERE I lie and dance no more:
Sayonara, sayonara!
With a tombstone for my door,
Here I keep unwonted state,
I that danced up to Death's gate.
Sayonara![1]

Other damsels dance for you:
Sayonara, sayonara!
Sweetest flowers that ever blew:
Curtseying crocus, iris tall:
Ah, their dances never pall—
Sayonara!

Long I danced: too long, too long:
Sayonara, sayonara!
Sang for you my foolish song.
Now I neither sing nor weep,
But mid iris-roots I sleep,
Sayonara!

Oh, you paid my dance with gold:
Sayonara, sayonara!
Now a better wealth I hold:

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[1] Good-bye.

Folded buds of silver lilies,
Golden buds of daffadillies,
Sayonara!

Flags may curtsey to the sun:
Sayonara, sayonara!
But my dancing days are done:
Glad they were so short a span,
Here I sleep, O Hime San;
Sayonara!

NORA HOPPER.

ROUGH gown, stuff gown, my love hath noble raiment,
Silk robes and scarlet robes, pearls of great price:
If a man kiss her gown, death is his payment—
"*Nay: but I keep the gates of Paradise.*"

Chained hand, stained hand, my love has fingers whiter
Than any lily that rocks upon the lake:
If a man kiss her hand death falls the lighter—
"*She sends thee sleeping fast? I bid thee wake.*"

Bare head, fair head, my love's head on her pillow
Black as a bird's wing lies, circled with gold:
If a man touch it, he swings from a willow—
"*Doth her love burn thee so? My breast is cold.*"

Torn wings, shorn wings, my love goeth wingless:
She is wind and water, fire that upward springs.
Ere I died praising her I left my harp all stringless.
"*From my stripped pinions my children make them wings.*"

Grave eyes, brave eyes, wert thou fain to bear them?
Once my love in childbed lay, and cried for pain.
I too bore dreams with tears, and the four winds tare them.
"*My children are thy dreams warm with life again.*"

End me or mend me: heavy is my burden!
Years ago we died, and I claim her sins for mine.
So she walks heaven's paths hell shall be my guerdon—
"*I who ope the gate to thee was once that love of thine.*"

NORA HOPPER.

HUGH OF THE HILL.

He comes from the mountains green
To the yellow shore:
A thousand years he's seen
And a thousand more.
His hair is dark as the night,
And gray as the sea
Are the wonderful eyes whose light
Grows soft for me.

Hugh of the Hill has seen
Colleens galore,
Barefooted on the green
Edge of the shore.
Now they are laid away
Under the earth,
Grow neither sad nor gay
For a fairy's mirth.

Hugh of the Hill has made
Some sore hearts glad;
He has bidden the strong be afraid
And the merry sad.
He has given fairy gold,
To the miser's store:
He has kissed the warm mouth cold,
And the light heart sore.

Hugh of the Hill, I know,
  Loves me to-day.
It is not he will go,
  Grown tired, away.
But *I* shall go from the hearth
  That's mine no more
To the quiet bosom of Earth
  That is cradle and door.

Hugh of the Hill, to-night
  Is mine alone.
Kiss me, and hold me tight
  Lest I be gone
Into a chamber dark
  Where you cannot come:
Where you shall call and hark
  And I lie dumb.

Now I can hold you close
  And answer and hear,
And kiss as a woman knows
  When her heart holds fear.
So short is my time to flower,
  So long you will
Seek love, and be glad but an hour,
  Hugh of the Hill!

NORA HOPPER.

ROBIN HOOD'S GOOD-NIGHT.

GOOD-NIGHT, good-night, Heart's Dearest. The Hunter holds the sky,
There wakes no soul in Sherwood save Little John and I.
'Twixt thee and me the grasses grow thick and soft and green,
And falls a drift of hawthorn above thee for a screen —
'Twixt thee and me, Heart's Dearest, the grass is green.

Shall I not soon, Heart's Dearest, good-morrow to thee say,
And kiss thy lips of kisses forlorn for many a day?
Shall I bid thee good-morrow, good-night to Little John,
And lay me down beside thee to slumber sweetly on —
Nor dream of lonely Sherwood, nor Little John?

Shall we go seek, Heart's Dearest, that land of afternoon,
Where lovers to their lasses pipe out a sleepy tune?
Where care may never enter, and love grow never cold —
Where Allan walks, a-harping a tune we knew of old?
Shall we not journey thither, O heart of gold?

NORA HOPPER.

WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

WHERE *are you going*
O muirnean, muirnean?
Beyond all snowing,
Beyond all reach
Of tenderest speech,
Or waves that break
Upon any beach;
Or wind's rough blowing
On linn or lake—
It's there is going
Your muirnean O.

Where are you going,
O muirnean, muirnean?
Love is not knowing
Why you fell weary,
Why you found dreary
The way all feet in the world are going.
Stay with us, dearie—
Ah, muirnean O!

I must be going;
Though you stand nearest
Of all, and dearest,
You cannot keep me, for I must go.
Though my heart's breaking
That I'm forsaking
The faces kent and the ways I know:

I'll not be staying
For all your praying,
For all the gifts in kind Love's bestowing.
I must not stay though you hold me so,
Ah no, no, no!

My bird's the raven;
The doves no more
Will I be heeding,
Will I be feeding
Here at my door,
Crooning together
As once of old.
My bed's the heather,
My bed is green,
And it is not cold.
To the quiet haven
My boat is going,
Where no wind's blowing
Or storm has been.
The Ninth Wave's creeping
About my feet:
Let me go, Sweet —
I'm to my sleeping
And fain to go.
O muirnean, muirnean,
My muirnean O!

NORA HOPPER.

SELF-DISCIPLINE.

WHEN the soul sought refuge in the place of rest,
Overborne by strife and pain beyond control,
From some secret hollow, whisper soft-confessed,
Came the legend of the soul.

Some bright one of old time laid his sceptre down,
So his heart might learn of sweet and bitter truth;
Going forth bereft of beauty, throne, and crown,
And the sweetness of his youth.

So the old appeal and fierce revolt we make
Through the world's hour dies within our primal will;
And we justify the pain and hearts that break,
And our lofty doom fulfil.

"A. E."

EPILOGUE.

Well — when all is said and done
Best within my narrow way —
May some angel of the sun
Muse memorial o'er my clay:

"Here was Beauty all betrayed
From the freedom of her state;
From her human uses stayed
On an idle rhyme to wait.

"Ah, what deep despair might move
If the beauty lit a smile;
Or the heart was warm with love
That was pondering the while.

"He has built his monument
With the winds of time at strife,
Who could have before he went
Written on the Book of Life.

"To the stars from which he came
Empty-handed he goes home.
He who might have wrought in flame
Only traced upon the foam."

"A. E."

The Bibelot

PREVIOUS *to the discovery that he could write prose William Morris in the winter months of 1854–5 had discovered that he could write poetry. It is unfortunately too true that his earliest poem* The Willow and the Red Cliff, *together with many others no longer exist, having been destroyed shortly after* The Defence of Guenevere *was put to press in 1858.*

"Such were the first beginnings" of a genius destined to run a mighty race: one who was preordained to hand on the torch to others, though perhaps never to be equalled for supremacy in every art he touched while the world lasts!

If we accept Mr. Mackail's list of Morris's contributions to the Oxford and Cambridge Magazine *for 1856 as conclusive,*[1] *but eight tales belong to him, instead of nine as stated by Mr. Forman.*[2] *Of*

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1 *It is the same as Mr. Forman's list, excluding* A Night in a Cathedral. *See* The Life of William Morris *by J. W. Mackail, 2 vols., octavo, (London, 1899,) Vol. I, pp. 50–61, 97–8. See also The Bibelot, Vol. III, p. 204; Vol. V, p. 1.*

2 The Books of William Morris *by H. Buxton Forman, (London, 1897).*

these eight, five may be taken as "the flower of Morris's early work" wherein "the world is one of pure romance;" of which we have already reprinted The Hollow Land, Gertha's Lovers, Golden Wings, *and now add a fourth,* Svend and His Brethren. *The fifth will shortly be given, and during the coming year it is our intention to complete the entire series.*

In summing up may it not be well to consider his biographer's critical estimate of these stories of old time? "The prose romances which he began to write in the summer of 1855, and went on writing for about a year, are as remarkable as his early poetry, and have a strength and beauty which is quite as rare."

FOR OCTOBER:
ERNEST DOWSON
By
ARTHUR SYMONS.

SVEND AND HIS BRETHREN

A Tale

BY WILLIAM MORRIS.

SVEND AND HIS BRETHREN.

A KING in the olden time ruled over a mighty nation: a proud man he must have been, any man who was king of that nation: hundreds of lords, each a prince over many people, sat about him in the council chamber, under the dim vault, that was blue like the vault of heaven, and shone with innumerable glistenings of golden stars.

North, south, east, and west, spread that land of his, the sea did not stop it; his empire clomb the high mountains, and spread abroad its arms over the valleys of them; all along the sea-line shone cities set with their crowns of towers in the midst of broad bays, each fit, it seemed, to be a harbour for the navies of all the world.

Inland the pastures and cornlands lay, chequered much with climbing, over-tumbling grape-vines, under the sun that crumbled their clods, and drew up the young wheat in the spring time, under the rain that made the long grass soft and fine, under all fair fertilizing influences: the streams leapt down from the mountain tops, or cleft their way through the ridged ravines; they grew great rivers, like seas each one.

The mountains were cloven, and gave

forth from their scarred sides wealth of ore and splendour of marble; all things this people that King Valdemar ruled over could do; they levelled mountains, that over the smooth roads the wains might go, laden with silk and spices from the sea: they drained lakes, that the land might yield more and more, as year by year the serfs, driven like cattle, but worse fed, worse housed, died slowly, scarce knowing that they had souls; they builded them huge ships, and said that they were masters of the sea too; only, I trow the sea was an unruly subject, and often sent them back their ships cut into more pieces than the pines of them were, when the adze first fell upon them; they raised towers, and bridges, and marble palaces with endless corridors rose-scented, and cooled with welling fountains.

They sent great armies and fleets to all the points of heaven that the wind blows from, who took and burned many happy cities, wasted many fields and valleys, blotted out from the memory of men the names of nations, made their men's lives a hopeless shame and misery to them, their women's lives disgrace, and then — came home to

have flowers thrown on them in showers, to be feasted and called heroes.

Should not then their king be proud of them? Moreover they could fashion stone and brass into the shapes of men; they could write books; they knew the names of the stars, and their number; they knew what moved the passions of men in the hearts of them, and could draw you up cunningly, catalogues of virtues and vices; their wise men could prove to you that any lie was true, that any truth was false, till your head grew dizzy, and your heart sick, and you almost doubted if there were a God.

Should not then their king be proud of them? Their men were strong in body, and moved about gracefully—like dancers; and the purple-black, scented hair of their gold-clothed knights seemed to shoot out rays under the blaze of light that shone like many suns in the king's halls. Their women's faces were very fair in red and white, their skins fair and half-transparent like the marble of their mountains, and their voices sounded like the rising of soft music from step to step of their own white palaces.

Should not then their king be proud of

such a people, who seemed to help so in carrying on the world to its consummate perfection, which they even hoped their grandchildren would see?

Alas! alas! they were slaves — king and priest, noble and burgher, just as much as the meanest tasked serf, perhaps more even than he, for they were so willingly, but he unwillingly enough.

They could do everything but justice, and truth, and mercy; therefore God's judgments hung over their heads, not fallen yet, but surely to fall one time or other.

For ages past they had warred against one people only, whom they could not utterly subdue; a feeble people in numbers, dwelling in the very midst of them, among the mountains; yet now they were pressing them close; acre after acre, with seas of blood to purchase each acre, had been wrested from the free people, and their end seemed drawing near; and this time the king, Valdemar, had marched to their land with a great army, to make war on them, he boasted to himself, almost for the last time.

A walled town in the free land; in that town, a house built of rough, splintery stones;

and in a great low-browed room of that house, a grey-haired man pacing to and fro impatiently: "Will she never come?" he says, "it is two hours since the sun set; news, too, of the enemy's being in the land; how dreadful if she is taken!" His great broad face is marked with many furrows made by the fierce restless energy of the man; but there is a wearied look on it, the look of a man who, having done his best, is yet beaten; he seemed to long to be gone and be at peace: he, the fighter in many battles, who often had seemed with his single arm to roll back the whole tide of fight, felt despairing enough now; this last invasion, he thought, must surely quite settle the matter; wave after wave, wave after wave, had broken on that dear land and been rolled back from it, and still the hungry sea pressed on; they must be finally drowned in that sea; how fearfully they had been tried for their sins. Back again to his anxiety concerning Cissela, his daughter, go his thoughts, and he still paces up and down wearily, stopping now and then to gaze intently on things which he has seen a hundred times; and the night has altogether come on.

At last the blast of a horn from outside, challenge and counter-challenge, and the wicket to the court-yard is swung open; for this house, being in a part of the city where the walls are somewhat weak, is a little fortress in itself, and is very carefully guarded. The old man's face brightened at the sound of the new comers, and he went toward the entrance of the house where he was met by two young knights fully armed, and a maiden. "Thank God you are come," he says; but stops when he sees her face, which is quite pale, almost wild with some sorrow. "The saints! Cissela, what is it?" he says, "Father, Eric will tell you." Then suddenly a clang, for Eric has thrown on the ground a richly-jewelled sword, sheathed, and sets his foot on it, crunching the pearls on the sheath; then says, flinging up his head,— "There, father, the enemy is in the land; may that happen to every one of them! but for my part I have accounted for two already." "Son Eric, son Eric, you talk for ever about yourself; quick, tell me about Cissela instead: if you go on boasting and talking always about yourself, you will come to no good end, son, after all." But as he

says this, he smiles nevertheless, and his eye glistens.

"Well, father, listen — such a strange thing she tells us, not to be believed, if she did not tell us herself; the enemy has suddenly got generous, one of them at least, which is something of a disappointment to me — ah! pardon, about myself again; and that is about myself too. Well, father, what am I to do? — But Cissela, she wandered some way from her maidens, when — ah! but I never could tell a story properly, let her tell it herself; here Cissela! — well, well, I see she is better employed, talking namely, how should I know what! with Siur in the window-seat yonder — but she told us that, as she wandered almost by herself, she presently heard shouts and saw many of the enemy's knights riding quickly towards her; whereat she knelt only and prayed to God, who was very gracious to her; for when, as she thought, something dreadful was about to happen, the chief of the knights (a very noble-looking man, she said) rescued her, and, after he had gazed earnestly into her face, told her she might go back again to her own home, and her maids with her, if

only she would tell him where she dwelt and her name; and withal he sent three knights to escort her some way toward the city; then he turned and rode away with all his knights but those three, who, when they knew that he had quite gone, she says, began to talk horribly, saying things whereof in her terror she understood the import only: then, before worse came to pass came I and slew two, as I said, and the other ran away 'lustily with a good courage;' and that is the sword of one of the slain knights, or, as one might rather call them, rascally caitiffs."

The old man's thoughts seemed to have gone wandering after his son had finished; for he said nothing for some time, but at last spoke dejectedly.

"Eric, brave son, when I was your age I too hoped, and my hopes are come to this at last; you are blind in your hopeful youth, Eric, and do not see that this king (for the king it certainly was) will crush us, and not the less surely because he is plainly not ungenerous, but rather a good, courteous knight. Alas! poor old Gunnar, broken down now and ready to die, as your country is! How often, in the olden time, thou

used'st to say to thyself, as thou didst ride at the head of our glorious house, 'this charge may finish this matter, this battle must.' They passed away, those gallant fights, and still the foe pressed on, and hope, too, slowly ebbed away, as the boundaries of our land grew less and less: behold this is the last wave but one or two, and then for a sad farewell to name and freedom. Yet, surely the end of the world must come when we are swept from off the face of the earth. God waits long, they say, before he avenges his own."

As he was speaking, Siur and Cissela came nearer to him, and Cissela, all traces of her late terror gone from her face now, raising her lips to his bended forehead, kissed him fondly, and said, with glowing face,

"Father, how can I help our people? Do they want deaths? I will die. Do they want happiness? I will live miserably through years and years, nor ever pray for death."

Some hope or other seemed growing up in his heart, and showing through his face; and he spoke again, putting back the hair from off her face, and clasping it about with both his hands, while he stooped to kiss her.

"God remember your mother, Cissela! Then it was no dream after all, but true perhaps, as indeed it seemed at the time; but it must come quickly, that woman's deliverance, or not at all. When was it that I heard that old tale, that sounded even then true to my ears? for we have not been punished for nought, my son; that is not God's way. It comes across my memory somehow, mingled in a wonderful manner with the purple of the pines on the hill-side, with the fragrance of them borne from far towards me; for know, my children, that in times past, long, long past now, we did an evil deed; for our forefathers, who have been dead now, and forgiven so long ago, once mad with rage at some defeat from their enemies, fired a church, and burned therein many women who had fled thither for refuge; and from that time a curse cleaves to us. Only they say, that at the last we may be saved from utter destruction by a woman; I know not. God grant it may be so."

Then she said, "Father, brother, and you, Siur, come with me to the chapel; I wish you to witness me make an oath."

Her face was pale, her lips were pale,

her golden hair was pale; but not pale, it seemed, from any sinking of blood, but from gathering of intensest light from somewhere, her eyes perhaps, for they appeared to burn inwardly.

They followed the sweeping of her purple robe in silence through the low heavy-beamed passages: they entered the little chapel, dimly lighted by the moon that night, as it shone through one of the three arrow-slits of windows at the east end. There was little wealth of marble there, I trow; little time had those fighting men for stone-smoothing. Albeit, one noted many semblances of flowers even in the dim half-light, and here and there the faces of BRAVE men, roughly cut enough, but grand, because the hand of the carver had followed his loving heart. Neither was there gold wanting to the altar and its canopy; and above the low pillars of the nave hung banners, taken from the foe by the men of that house, gallant with gold and jewels.

She walked up to the altar and took the blessed book of the Gospels from the left side of it; then knelt in prayer for a moment or two, while the three men stood behind

her reverently. When she rose she made a sign to them, and from their scabbards gleamed three swords in the moonlight; then, while they held them aloft, and pointed toward the altar, she opened the book at the page whereon was painted Christ the Lord dying on the cross, pale against the gleaming gold: she said, in a firm voice, "Christ God, who diedst for all men, so help me, as I refuse not life, happiness, even honour, for this people whom I love."

Then she kissed the face so pale against the gold, and knelt again.

But when she had risen, and before she could leave the space by the altar, Siur had stepped up to her, and seized her hurriedly, folding both his arms about her; she let herself be held there, her bosom against his; then he held her away from him a little space, holding her by the arms near the shoulder; then he took her hands and led them across his shoulders, so that now she held him.

And they said nothing; what could they say? Do you know any word for what they meant?

And the father and brother stood by,

looking quite awe-struck, more so they seemed than by her solemn oath. Till Siur, raising his head from where it lay, cried out aloud: "May God forgive me as I am true to her! hear you, father and brother?"

Then said Cissela: "May God help me in my need, as I am true to Siur."

And the others went, and they two were left standing there alone, with no little awe over them, strange and shy as they had never yet been to each other. Cissela shuddered, and said in a quick whisper; "Siur, on your knees! and pray that these oaths may never clash."

"Can they, Cissela?" he said.

"O love," she cried, "you have loosed my hand; take it again, or I shall die, Siur!"

He took both her hands, he held them fast to his lips, to his forehead; he said: "No, God does not allow such things: truth does not lie; you are truth; this need not be prayed for."

She said; "Oh, forgive me! yet — yet this old chapel is damp and cold even in the burning summer weather. O knight Siur, something strikes through me; I pray you kneel and pray."

He looked steadily at her for a long time without answering, as if he were trying once for all to become indeed one with her; then said: "Yes, it is possible; in no other way could you give up everything."

Then he took from off his finger a thin golden ring, and broke it in two, and gave her the one half, saying: "When will they come together?"

Then within a while they left the chapel, and walked as in a dream between the dazzling lights of the hall, where the knights sat now, and between those lights sat down together, dreaming still the same dream each of them; while all the knights shouted for Siur and Cissela. Even if a man had spent all his life looking for sorrowful things, even if he sought for them with all his heart and soul, and even though he had grown grey in that quest, yet would he have found nothing in all the world, or perhaps in all the stars either, so sorrowful as Cissela.

They had accepted her sacrifice after long deliberation, they had arrayed her in purple and scarlet, they had crowned her with gold wrought about with jewels, they had spread abroad the veil of her golden hair; yet now,

as they led her forth in the midst of the band of knights, her brother Eric holding fast her hand, each man felt like a murderer when he beheld her face, whereon was no tear, wherein was no writhing of muscle, twitching of nerve, wherein was no sorrow-mark of her own, but only the sorrow-mark which God sent her, and which she *must* perforce wear.

Yet they had not caught eagerly at her offer, they had said at first almost to a man: "Nay, this thing shall not be, let us die altogether rather than this." Yet as they sat, and said this, to each man of the council came floating dim memories of that curse of the burned women, and its remedy; to many it ran rhythmically, an old song better known by the music than the words, heard once and again, long ago, when the gusty wind overmastered the chestnut-boughs, and strewed the smooth sward with their star-leaves.

Withal came thoughts to each man, partly selfish, partly wise and just, concerning his own wife and children, concerning children yet unborn; thoughts too of the glory of the old name; all that had been suffered and done that the glorious free land might yet be a nation.

And the spirit of hope, never dead but sleeping only, woke up within their hearts: "We may yet be a people," they said to themselves, "if we can but get breathing time."

And as they thought these things, and doubted, Siur rose up in the midst of them and said: "You are right in what you think, countrymen, and she is right; she is altogether good and noble; send her forth."

Then, with one look of utter despair at her as she stood statue-like, he left the council, lest he should fall down and die in the midst of them, he said; yet he died not then, but lived for many years afterwards.

But they rose from their seats, and when they were armed, and she royally arrayed, they went with her, leading her through the dear streets, whence you always saw the great pine-shadowed mountains; she went away from all that was dear to her, to go and sit a crowned queen in the dreary marble palace, whose outer walls rose right up from the weary-hearted sea. She could not think, she durst not; she feared if she did, that she would curse her beauty, almost curse the name of love, curse Siur, though

she knew he was right, for not slaying her; she feared that she might curse God.

So she thought not at all, steeping her senses utterly in forgetfulness of the happy past, destroying all anticipation of the future: yet, as they left the city amid the tears of women, and fixed sorrowful gaze of men, she turned round once, and stretched her arms out involuntarily, like a dumb senseless thing, towards the place where she was born, and where her life grew happier day by day, and where his arms first crept round about her.

She turned away and thought, but in a cold speculative manner, how it was possible that she was bearing this sorrow; as she often before had wondered, when slight things vexed her overmuch, how people had such sorrows and lived, and almost doubted if the pain was so much greater in great sorrows than in small troubles, or whether the nobleness only was greater, the pain not sharper, but more lingering.

Halfway toward the camp the king's people met her; and over the trampled ground, where they had fought so fiercely but a little time before, they spread breadth

of golden cloth, that her feet might not touch the arms of her dead countrymen, or their brave bodies.

And so they came at last with many trumpet-blasts to the king's tent, who stood at the door of it, to welcome his bride that was to be: a noble man truly to look on, kindly, and genial-eyed; the red blood sprang up over his face when she came near; and she looked back no more, but bowed before him almost to the ground, and would have knelt, but that he caught her in his arms and kissed her; she was pale no more now; and the king, as he gazed delightedly at her, did not notice that sorrow-mark, which was plain enough to her own people.

So the trumpets sounded again one long peal that seemed to make all the air reel and quiver, and the soldiers and lords shouted: "Hurrah for the Peace-Queen, Cissela!"

* * * * *

"Come, Harald," said a beautiful golden-haired boy to one who was plainly his younger brother, "Come, and let us leave Robert here by the forge, and show our lady-mother this beautiful thing. Sweet master armourer, farewell."

"Are you going to the queen then?" said the armourer.

"Yea," said the boy, looking wonderingly at the strong craftsman's eager face.

"But, nay; let me look at you awhile longer, you remind me so much of one I loved long ago in my own land. Stay awhile till your other brother goes with you."

"Well, I will stay, and think of what you have been telling me; I do not feel as if I should ever think of anything else for long together, as long as I live."

So he sat down again on an old battered anvil, and seemed with his bright eyes to be beholding something in the land of dreams. A gallant dream it was he dreamed; for he saw himself with his brothers and friends about him, seated on a throne, the justest king in all the earth, his people the lovingest of all people: he saw the ambassadors of the restored nations, that had been unjustly dealt with long ago; everywhere love, and peace if possible, justice and truth at all events.

Alas! he knew not that vengeance, so long delayed, must fall at last in his life-time; he knew not that it takes longer to restore that

whose growth has been through age and age, than the few years of a life-time; yet was the reality good, if not as good as the dream.

Presently his twin-brother Robert woke him from that dream, calling out: "Now, brother Svend, are we really ready; see here! but stop, kneel first; there, now am I the Bishop."

And he pulled his brother down on to his knees, and put on his head, where it fitted loosely enough now, hanging down from left to right, an iron crown fantastically wrought, which he himself, having just finished it, had taken out of the water, cool and dripping.

Robert and Harald laughed loud when they saw the crown hanging all askew, and the great drops rolling from it into Svend's eyes and down his cheeks, looking like tears: not so Svend; he rose, holding the crown level on his head, holding it back, so that it pressed against his brow hard, and, first dashing the drops to right and left, caught his brother by the hand, and said: "May I keep it, Robert? I shall wear it some day."

"Yea," said the other; "but it is a poor thing; better let Siur put it in the furnace again and make it into sword hilts."

Thereupon they began to go, Svend holding the crown in his hand: but as they were going, Siur called out: "Yet will I sell my dagger at a price, Prince Svend, even as you wished at first, rather than give it you for nothing."

"Well, for what?" said Svend, somewhat shortly, for he thought Siur was going back from his promise, which seemed ugly to him.

"Nay, be not angry prince," said the armourer, "only I pray you to satisfy this whim of mine; it is the first favour I have asked of you: will you ask the fair, noble lady, your mother, from Siur the smith, if she is happy now?"

"Willingly, sweet master Siur, if it pleases you; farewell."

And with happy young faces they went away; and when they were gone, Siur from a secret place drew out various weapons and armour, and began to work at them, having first drawn bolt and bar of his workshop carefully.

Svend, with Harald and Robert his two brethren, went their ways to the queen, and found her sitting alone in a fair court of the palace full of flowers, with a marble cloister

round about it; and when she saw them coming, she rose up to meet them, her three fair sons.

Truly as that right royal woman bent over them lovingly, there seemed little need of Siur's question.

So Svend showed her his dagger, but not the crown; and she asked many questions concerning Siur the smith, about his way of talking and his face, the colour of his hair even, till the boys wondered, she questioned them so closely, with beaming eyes and glowing cheeks, so that Svend thought he had never before seen his mother look so beautiful.

Then Svend said: "And, mother, don't be angry with Siur, will you? because he sent a message to you by me."

"Angry!" and straightway her soul was wandering where her body could not come, and for a moment or two she was living as before, with him close by her, in the old mountain land.

"Well, mother, he wanted me to ask you if you were happy now."

"Did he, Svend, this man with brown hair, grizzled as you say it is now? Is his

hair soft then, this Siur, going down on to his shoulders in waves? and his eyes, do they glow steadily, as if lighted up from his heart? and how does he speak? Did you not tell me that his words led you, whether you would or no, into dreamland? Ah well! tell him I am happy, but not so happy as we shall be, as we were. And so you, son Robert, are getting to be quite a cunning smith; but do you think you will ever beat Siur?"

"Ah, mother, no," he said, "there is something with him that makes him seem quite infinitely beyond all other workmen I have ever heard of."

Some memory coming from that dreamland smote upon her heart more than the others; she blushed like a young girl, and said hesitatingly:

"Does he work with his left hand, son Robert; for I have heard that some men do so?" But in her heart she remembered how once, long ago in the old mountain country, in her father's house, some one had said that only men who were born so, could do cunningly with the left hand; and how Siur, then quite a boy, had said, "Well, I will try:" and how, in a month or two, he

had come to her with an armlet of silver, very curiously wrought, which he had done with his own left hand.

So Robert said: "Yea, mother, he works with his left hand almost as much as with his right, and sometimes I have seen him change the hammer suddenly from his right hand to his left, with a kind of half smile, as one who would say, 'Cannot I then?' and this more when he does smith's work in metal than when he works in marble; and once I heard him say when he did so, 'I wonder where my first left hand work is; ah! I bide my time.' I wonder also, mother, what he meant by that."

She answered no word, but shook her arm free from its broad sleeve, and something glittered on it, near her wrist, something wrought out of silver set with quaint and uncouthly-cut stones of little value.

* * * * *

In the council chamber, among the lords, sat Svend and his six brethren; he chief of all in the wielding of sword or axe, in the government of people, in drawing the love of men and women to him; perfect in face and body, in wisdom and strength was

Svend: next to him sat Robert, cunning in working of marble, or wood, or brass; all things could he make to look as if they lived, from the sweep of an angel's wings down to the slipping of a little field-mouse from under the sheaves in the harvest-time. Then there was Harald, who knew concerning all the stars of heaven and flowers of earth: Richard, who drew men's hearts from their bodies, with the words that swung to and fro in his glorious rhymes: William, to whom the air of heaven seemed a servant when the harp-strings quivered underneath his fingers: there were the two sailor-brothers, who the year before, young though they were, had come back from a long, perilous voyage, with news of an island they had found long and long away to the west, larger than any that this people knew of, but very fair and good, though uninhabited.

But now over all this noble brotherhood, with its various gifts hung one cloud of sorrow; their mother, the Peace-Queen Cissela was dead, she who had taught them truth and nobleness so well; she was never to see the beginning of the end that they would work; truly it seemed sad.

There sat the seven brothers in the council chamber, waiting for the king, speaking no word, only thinking drearily; and under the pavement of the great church Cissela lay, and by the side of her tomb stood two men, old men both, Valdemar the king, and Siur.

So the king, after that he had gazed awhile on the carven face of her he had loved well, said at last:

"And now, Sir Carver, must you carve me also to lie there." And he pointed to the vacant space by the side of the fair alabaster figure.

"O king," said Siur, "except for a very few strokes on steel, I have done work now, having carved the queen there; I cannot do this thing for you."

What was it sent a sharp pang of bitterest suspicion through the very heart of the poor old man? he looked steadfastly at him for a moment or two, as if he would know all secrets; he could not, he had not strength of life enough to get to the bottom of things; doubt vanished soon from his heart and his face under Siur's pitying gaze; he said, "Then perhaps I shall be my own statue," and therewithal he sat down on the edge of

the low marble tomb, and laid his right arm across her breast; he fixed his eyes on the eastern belt of windows, and sat quite motionless and silent; and he never knew that she loved him not.

But Siur, when he had gazed at him for awhile, stole away quietly, as we do when we fear to awaken a sleeper; and the king never turned his head, but still sat there, never moving, scarce breathing, it seemed.

Siur stood in his own great hall (for his house was large), he stood before the dais, and saw a fair sight, the work of his own hands.

For, fronting him, against the wall were seven thrones, and behind them a cloth of samite of purple wrought with golden stars, and barred across from right to left with long bars of silver and crimson, and edged below with melancholy, fading green, like a September sunset; and opposite each throne was a glittering suit of armour wrought wonderfully in bright steel, except that on the breast of each suit was a face worked marvellously in enamel, the face of Cissela in a glory of golden hair; and the glory of that gold spread away from the breast on all

sides, and ran cunningly along with the steel rings, in such a way as it is hard even to imagine: moreover, on the crest of each helm was wrought the phœnix, the never-dying bird, the only creature that knows the sun; and by each suit lay a gleaming sword terrible to look at, steel from pommel to point, but wrought along the blade in burnished gold that outflashed the gleam of the steel, was written in fantastic letters the word "Westward."

So Siur gazed till he heard foot-steps coming; then he turned to meet them. And Svend and his brethren sat silent in the council chamber, till they heard a great noise and clamour of the people arise through all the streets; then they rose to see what it might be. Meanwhile on the low marble tomb, under the dim sweeping vault sat, or rather lay, the king; for, though his right arm still lay over her breast, his head had fallen forward, and rested now on the shoulder of the marble queen. There he lay, with strange confusion of his scarlet, gold-wrought robes; silent, motionless, and dead. The seven brethren stood together on a marble terrace of the royal palace, that

was dotted about on the balusters of it with white statues: they were helmetted, and armed to the teeth, only over their armour great black cloaks were thrown.

Now the whole great terrace was a-sway with the crowd of nobles and princes, and others that were neither nobles or princes, but true men only; and these were helmetted and wrapped in black cloaks even as the princes were, only the crests of the princes' helms were wrought wonderfully with that bird, the phœnix, all flaming with new power, dying because its old body is not strong enough for its new-found power: and those on that terrace who were unarmed had anxious faces, some fearful, some stormy with Devil's rage at disappointment; but among the faces of those helmed ones, though here and there you might see a pale face, there was no fear or rage, scarcely even any anxiety, but calm, brave joy seemed to be on all.

Above the heads of all men on that terrace shone out Svend's brave face, the golden hair flowing from out of his helmet: a smile of quiet confidence overflowing from his mighty heart, in the depths of which it was

dwelling, just showed a very little on his eyes and lips.

While all the vast square, and all the windows and roofs even of the houses over against the palace, were alive with an innumerable sea of troubled raging faces, showing white, upturned from the undersea of their many-coloured raiment; the murmur from them was like the sough of the first tempest-wind among the pines; and the gleam of spears here and there like the last few gleams of the sun through the woods when the black thunder-clouds come up over all, soon to be shone through, those woods, by the gleam of the deep lightning.

Also sometimes the murmur would swell, and from the heart of it would come a fierce, hoarse, tearing, shattering roar, strangely discordant, of "War! War! give us war, O king!"

Then Svend stepping forward, his arms hidden under his long cloak as they hung down quietly, the smile on his face broadening somewhat, sent from his chest a mighty, effortless voice over all the raging:

"Hear, O ye people! War with all that is ugly and base; peace with all that is fair

and good.—NO WAR with my brother's people."

Just then one of those unhelmetted, creeping round about stealthily to the place where Svend stood, lifted his arm and smote at him with a dagger; whereupon Svend clearing his right arm from his cloak with his left, lifted up his glittering right hand, and the traitor fell to the earth groaning with a broken jaw, for Svend had smitten him on the mouth a backward blow with his open hand.

One shouted from the crowd, "Ay, murderer Svend, slay our good nobles, as you poisoned the king your father, that you and your false brethren might oppress us with the memory of that Devil's witch, your mother!"

The smile left Svend's face and heart now, he looked very stern as he said:

"Hear, O ye people! In years past when I was a boy my dream of dreams was ever this, how I should make you good, and because good, happy, when I should become king over you; but as year by year passed I saw my dream flitting; the deep colours of it changed, faded, grew grey in the light of coming manhood; nevertheless, God be my witness, that I have ever striven to make

you just and true, hoping against hope continually; and I had even determined to bear everything and stay with you, even though you should remain unjust and liars, for the sake of the few who really love me: but now, seeing that God has made you mad, and that his vengeance will speedily fall, take heed how you cast out from you all that is good and true-hearted! Once more —which choose you, Peace or War?"

Between the good and the base, in the midst of the passionate faces and changing colours stood the great terrace, cold, and calm, and white, with its changeless statues; and for awhile there was silence.

Broken through at last by a yell, and the sharp whirr of arrows, and the cling, clang, from the armour of the terrace as Prince Harald staggered through unhurt, struck by the broad point on the helmet.

"What! War?" shouted Svend wrathfully, and his voice sounded like a clap of thunder following the lightning flash when a tower is struck. "What! war? swords for Svend! round about the king, good men and true! Sons of the golden-haired, show these men WAR."

As he spoke he let his black cloak fall, and up from their sheaths sprang seven swords, steel from pommel to point only; on the blades of them in fantastic letters of gold, shone the word WESTWARD.

Then all the terrace gleamed with steel, and amid the hurtling of stones and whizz of arrows they began to go westward.

* * * * *

The streets ran with blood, the air was filled with groans and curses, the low waves nearest the granite pier were edged with blood, because they first caught the drippings of the blood.

Then those of the people who durst stay on the pier saw the ships of Svend's little fleet leaving one by one; for he had taken aboard those ten ships whosoever had prayed to go, even at the last moment, wounded, or dying even; better so, for in their last moments came thoughts of good things to many of them, and it was good to be among the true.

But those haughty ones left behind, sullen and untamed, but with a horrible indefinable dread on them that was worse than death, or mere pain, howsoever fierce — these saw

all the ships go out of the harbour merrily with swelling sail and dashing oar, and with joyous singing of those aboard; and Svend's was the last of all.

Whom they saw kneel down on the deck unhelmed, then all sheathed their swords that were about him; and the Prince Robert took from Svend's hand an iron crown fantastically wrought, and placed it on his head as he knelt; then he continued kneeling still, till, as the ship drew further and further away from the harbour, all things aboard of her became indistinct.

And they never saw Svend and his brethren again.

Here ends what William the Englishman wrote; but afterwards (in the night-time) he found the book of a certain chronicler which saith:

"In the spring-time, in May, the 550th year from the death of Svend the wonderful king, the good knights, sailing due eastward, came to a harbour of a land they knew not: wherein they saw many goodly ships, but of a strange fashion like the ships of the ancients, and destitute of any mariners:

besides they saw no beacons for the guidance of seamen, nor was there any sound of bells or singing, though the city was vast, with many goodly towers and palaces. So when they landed they found that which is hardly to be believed, but which is nevertheless true: for about the quays and about the streets lay many people dead, or stood, but quite without motion, and they were all white or about the colour of new-hewn freestone, yet were they not statues but real men, for they had, some of them, ghastly wounds which showed their entrails, and the structure of their flesh, and veins, and bones.

"Moreover the streets were red and wet with blood, and the harbour waves were red with it, because it dripped in great drops slowly from the quays.

"Then when the good knights saw this, they doubted not but that it was a fearful punishment on this people for sins of theirs; thereupon they entered into a church of that city and prayed God to pardon them; afterwards, going back to their ships, sailed away marvelling.

"And I John who wrote this history saw all this with mine own eyes."

The Bibelot

IN a couplet which Dowson himself might have written,—

> *"Forget not this, forget not that, my dear!*
> *'Tis all and nothing, and the end is near,"—*

we possess as it were criticism and epitome of what he appears habitually to have thought and felt. Was it a passing mood that the long years would have effaced? Rather, was it not in the nature of things malign to come "quick to confusion"? The sympathetic study by Mr. Symons does not assure us as to any other possible finalé save that of renewed effort and renewed failure. So do the heart-wearied players step out of "this pageant world". The great Army of the Night has deserters from its ranks: ill-starred ones who stand aside while "the main masque defiles by the conspicuous portal." And along with these "pale Chattertons" of many creeds and climes, Dowson came to No-Man's-Land at last.

The final impression, then, that one gets from him and his verse is in substance this: behind the veil of personality if you could succeed in raising it — such seems to be his

ultimate analysis of human purpose and passion — you would find — nothing! The thought is not new; it is as old as Ennui. An echo from all outworn hearts; found, indeed, in much greater men and their works — Flaubert will serve for exemplar. The mystery of our days and deeds, according to the pessimistic outlook, may be likened to a series of cunningly devised but empty audience chambers; or if you prefer a different notion, a secret drawer one discovers by merest chance and forcing open finds a billet-doux, a faded ribbon, ashes of roses* — Rien!

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* *Not precisely fitted for derisive treatment however. Hence the good taste of Mr. Andrew Lang who recently printed in* The Critic *his belittlement of Dowson may well be called in question. The poet is dead in very sooth, but his lyric to Cynara lives and deserves to live, all jesting Pilates of literature notwithstanding.*

FOR NOVEMBER:

OLD ITALIAN GARDENS,
By
VERNON LEE.

ERNEST DOWSON
By
ARTHUR SYMONS.

Vitae summa brevis spem nos vetat incohare longam.

They are not long, the weeping and the laughter,
Love and desire and hate:
I think they have no portion in us after
We pass the gate.

They are not long, the days of wine and roses:
Out of a misty dream
Our path emerges for a while, then closes
Within a dream.

ERNEST DOWSON.

VENITE DESCENDAMUS.

LET be at last; give over words and sighing,
Vainly were all things said:
Better at last to find a place for lying,
Only dead.

Silence were best, with songs and sighing over;
Now be the music mute;
Now let the dead, red leaves of autumn cover
A vain lute.

Silence is best: for ever and for ever,
We will go down and sleep,
Somewhere beyond her ken, where she need never
Come to weep.

Let be at last: colder she grows and colder;
Sleep and the night were best;
Lying at last where we can not behold her,
We may rest.

ERNEST DOWSON.

ERNEST DOWSON.

I.

THE death of Ernest Dowson will mean very little to the world at large, but it will mean a great deal to the few people who care passionately for poetry. A little book of verses, the manuscript of another, a one-act play in verse, a few short stories, two novels written in collaboration, some translations from the French, done for money; that is all that was left by a man who was undoubtedly a man of genius, not a great poet, but a poet, one of the very few writers of our generation to whom that name can be applied in its most intimate sense. People will complain, probably, in his verses, of what will seem to them the factitious melancholy, the factitious idealism, and (peeping through at a few rare moments) the factitious suggestions of riot. They will see only a literary affectation, where in truth there is as genuine a note of personal sincerity as in the more explicit and arranged confessions of less admirable poets. Yes, in these few evasive, immaterial snatches of song, I find, implied for the most part, hidden away like a secret, all the fever and turmoil and the

unattained dreams of a life which had itself so much of the swift, disastrous, and suicidal impetus of genius.

Ernest Christopher Dowson was born at The Grove, Belmont Hill, Lee, Kent, on August 2nd, 1867; he died at 26, Sandhurst Gardens, Catford, S. E., on Friday morning, February 23rd, 1900, and was buried in the Roman Catholic part of the Lewisham Cemetery on February 27th. His great-uncle was Alfred Domett, Browning's "Waring," at one time Prime Minister of New Zealand, and author of "Ranolf and Amohia," and other poems. His father, who had himself a taste for literature, lived a good deal in France and on the Riviera, on account of the delicacy of his health, and Ernest had a somewhat irregular education, chiefly out of England, before he entered Queen's College, Oxford. He left in 1887 without taking a degree, and came to London, where he lived for several years, often revisiting France, which was always his favourite country. Latterly, until about a year ago, he lived almost entirely in Paris, Brittany, and Normandy. Never robust, and always reckless with himself, his health had been steadily

getting worse for some years, and when he came back to London he looked, as indeed he was, a dying man. Morbidly shy, with a sensitive independence which shrank from any sort of obligation, he would not communicate with his relatives, who would gladly have helped him, or with any of the really large number of attached friends whom he had in London; and, as his disease weakened him more and more, he hid himself away in his miserable lodgings, refused to see a doctor, let himself half starve, and was found one day in a Bodega with only a few shillings in his pocket, and so weak as to be hardly able to walk, by a friend, himself in some difficulties, who immediately took him back to the bricklayer's cottage in a muddy outskirt of Catford, where he was himself living, and there generously looked after him for the last six weeks of his life.

He did not realise that he was going to die, and was full of projects for the future, when the £600 which was to come to him from the sale of some property should have given him a fresh chance in the world; began to read Dickens, whom he had never read before, with singular zest; and, on the last

day of his life, sat up talking eagerly till five in the morning. At the very moment of his death he did not know that he was dying. He tried to cough, could not cough, and the heart quietly stopped.

II.

I cannot remember my first meeting with Ernest Dowson. It may have been in 1891, at one of the meetings of the Rhymers' Club, in an upper room at the Cheshire Cheese, where long clay pipes lay in slim heaps on the wooden tables, between tankards of ale; and young poets, then very young, recited their own verses to one another with a desperate and inaffectual attempt to get into key with the Latin Quarter. Though few of us were, as a matter of fact, Anglo-Saxon, we could not help feeling that we were in London, and the atmosphere of London is not the atmosphere of movements or of societies. In Paris it is the most natural thing in the world to meet and discuss literature, ideas, one's own and one another's work; and it can be done without pretentiousness or constraint, because, to the Latin mind, art, ideas, one's work and the work of one's friends, are definite and important things, which it would never occur to anyone to take anything but seriously. In England art has to be protected, not only against the world, but against

oneself and one's fellow artist, by a kind of affected modesty which is the Englishman's natural pose, half pride and half self-distrust. So this brave venture of the Rhymers' Club, though it lasted for two or three years, and produced two little books of verse which will some day be literary curiosities, was not quite a satisfactory kind of *cénacle*. Dowson, who enjoyed the real thing so much in Paris, did not, I think, go very often; but his contributions to the first book of the club were at once the most delicate and the most distinguished poems which it contained. Was it, after all, at one of these meetings that I first saw him, or was it, perhaps, at another haunt of some of us at that time, a semi-literary tavern near Leicester Square, chosen for its convenient position between two stage-doors? It was at the time when one or two of us sincerely worshipped the ballet; Dowson, alas, never. I could never get him to see that charm in harmonious and coloured movement, like bright shadows seen through the floating gauze of the music, which held me night after night at the two theatres which alone seemed to me to give an amusing colour to one's dreams. Neither

the stage nor the stage-door had any attraction for him; but he came to the tavern because it was a tavern, and because he could meet his friends there. Even before that time I have a vague impression of having met him, I forget where, certainly at night; and of having been struck, even then, by a look and manner of pathetic charm, a sort of Keats-like face, the face of a demoralized Keats, and by something curious in the contrast of a manner exquisitely refined, with an appearance generally somewhat dilapidated. That impression was only accentuated later on, when I came to know him, and the manner of his life, much more intimately.

I think I may date my first impression of what one calls "the real man" (as if it were more real than the poet of the disembodied verses!) from an evening in which he first introduced me to those charming supper-houses, open all night through, the cabmen's shelters. I had been talking over another vagabond poet, Lord Rochester, with a charming and sympathetic descendant of that poet, and somewhat late at night we had come upon Dowson and another man

wandering aimlessly and excitedly about the streets. He invited us to supper, we did not quite realise where, and the cabman came in with us, as we were welcomed, cordially and without comment, at a little place near the Langham; and, I recollect, very hospitably entertained. The cooking differs, as I found in time, in these supper-houses, but there the rasher was excellent and the cups admirably clean. Dowson was known there, and I used to think he was always at his best in a cabmen's shelter. Without a certain sordidness in his surroundings he was never quite comfortable, never quite himself; and at those places you are obliged to drink nothing stronger than coffee or tea. I liked to see him occasionally, for a change, drinking nothing stronger than coffee or tea. At Oxford, I believe, his favourite form of intoxication had been haschisch; afterwards he gave up this somewhat elaborate experiment in visionary sensations for readier means of oblivion; but he returned to it, I remember, for at least one afternoon, in a company of which I had been the gatherer and of which I was the host. I remember him sitting, a little anxiously, with his chin

on his breast, awaiting the magic, half-shy in the midst of a bright company of young people, whom he had only seen across the footlights. The experience was not a very successful one; it ended in what should have been its first symptom, immoderate laughter.

Always, perhaps, a little consciously, but at least always sincerely, in search of new sensations, my friend found what was for him the supreme sensation in a very passionate and tender adoration of the most escaping of all ideals, the ideal of youth. Cherished, as I imagine, first only in the abstract, this search after the immature, the ripening graces which time can only spoil in the ripening, found itself at the journey's end, as some of his friends thought, a little prematurely. I was never of their opinion. I only saw twice, and for a few moments only, the young girl to whom most of his verses were to be written, and whose presence in his life may be held to account for much of that astonishing contrast between the broad outlines of his life and work. The situation seemed to me of the most exquisite and appropriate impossibility. The daughter of a refugee, I believe of good family,

reduced to keeping a humble restaurant in a foreign quarter of London, she listened to his verses, smiled charmingly, under her mother's eyes, on his two years' courtship, and at the end of two years married the waiter instead. Did she ever realise more than the obvious part of what was being offered to her, in this shy and eager devotion? Did it ever mean very much to her to have made and to have killed a poet? She had, at all events, the gift of evoking, and, in its way, of retaining, all that was most delicate, sensitive, shy, typically poetic, in a nature which I can only compare to a weedy garden, its grass trodden down by many feet, but with one small, carefully tended flower-bed, luminous with lilies. I used to think, sometimes, of Verlaine and his "girl-wife," the one really profound passion, certainly, of that passionate career; the charming, child-like creature, to whom he looked back, at the end of his life, with an unchanged tenderness and disappointment: "Vous n'avez rien compris à ma simplicité," as he lamented. In the case of Dowson, however, there was a sort of virginal devotion, as to a Madonna; and I think had

things gone happily, to a conventionally happy ending, he would have felt (dare I say?) that his ideal had been spoilt.

But, for the good fortune of poets, things rarely do go happily with them, or to conventially happy endings. He used to dine every night at the little restaurant, and I can always see the picture, which I have so often seen through the window in passing; the narrow room with the rough tables, for the most part empty, except in the innermost corner, where Dowson would sit with that singularly sweet and singularly pathetic smile on his lips (a smile which seemed afraid of its right to be there, as if always dreading a rebuff) playing his invariable after-dinner game of cards. Friends would come in, during the hour before closing time; and the girl, her game of cards finished, would quietly disappear, leaving him with hardly more than the desire to kill another night as swiftly as possible.

Meanwhile she and the mother knew that the fragile young man, who dined there so quietly every day, was apt to be quite another sort of person after he had been three hours outside. It was only when his life seemed

to have been irretrievably ruined that Dowson quite deliberately abandoned himself to that craving for drink, which was doubtless lying in wait for him in his blood, as consumption was also; it was only latterly, when he had no longer any interest in life, that he really wished to die. But I have never known him when he could resist either the desire or the consequences of drink. Sober, he was the most gentle, in manner the most gentlemanly of men; unselfish to a fault, to the extent of weakness; a delightful companion, charm itself. Under the influence of drink, he became almost literally insane, certainly quite irresponsible. He fell into furious and unreasoning passions; a vocabulary unknown to him at other times sprang up like a whirlwind; he seemed always about to commit some act of absurd violence. Along with that forgetfulness came other memories. As long as he was conscious of himself, there was but one woman for him in the world, and for her he had an infinite tenderness, and an infinite respect. When that face faded from him, he saw all the other faces, and he saw no more difference than between sheep and sheep. Indeed, that

curious love of the sordid, so common an affectation of the modern decadent, and with him so genuine, grew upon him, and dragged him into more and more sorry corners of a life which was never exactly "gay" to him. His father, when he died, left him in possession of an old dock, where for a time he lived in a mouldering house, in that squalid part of the East End which he came to know so well, and to feel so strangely at home in. He drank the poisonous liquors of those pot-houses which swarm about the Docks; he drifted about in whatever company came in his way; he let heedlessness develop into a curious disregard of personal tidiness. In Paris, Les Halles took the place of the Docks. At Dieppe, where I saw so much of him one summer, he discovered strange, squalid haunts about the harbour, where he made friends with amazing inn-keepers, and got into rows with the fishermen who came in to drink after midnight. At Brussels, where I was with him at the time of the Kermesse, he flung himself into all that riotous Flemish life, with a zest for what was most sordidly riotous in it. It was his own way of escape from life.

To Dowson, as to all those who have not been "content to ask unlikely gifts in vain," nature, life, destiny, whatever one chooses to call it, that power which is strength to the strong, presented itself as a barrier against which all one's strength only served to dash one to more hopeless ruin. He was not a dreamer; destiny passes by the dreamer, sparing him because he clamours for nothing. He was a child, clamouring for so many things, all impossible. With a body too weak for ordinary existence, he desired all the enchantments of all the senses. With a soul too shy to tell its own secret, except in exquisite evasions, he desired the boundless confidence of love. He sang one tune, over and over, and no one listened to him. He had only to form the most simple wish, and it was denied him. He gave way to ill-luck, not knowing that he was giving way to his own weakness, and he tried to escape from the consciousness of things as they were at the best, by voluntarily choosing to accept them at their worst. For with him it was always voluntary. He was never quite without money; he had a little money of his own, and he had for many years a weekly

allowance from Mr. Smithers, in return for translations from the French, or, if he chose to do it, original work. He was unhappy, and he dared not think. To unhappy men, thought, if it can be set at work on abstract questions, is the only substitute for happiness; if it has not strength to overleap the barrier which shuts one in upon oneself, it is the one unwearying torture. Dowson had exquisite sensibility, he vibrated in harmony with every delicate emotion; but he had no outlook, he had not the escape of intellect. His only escape, then, was to plunge into the crowd, to fancy that he lost sight of himself as he disappeared from the sight of others. The more he soiled himself at that gross contact, the further would he seem to be from what beckoned to him in one vain illusion after another vain illusion, in the delicate places of the world. Seeing himself moving to the sound of lutes, in some courtly disguise, down an alley of Watteau's Versailles, while he touched finger-tips with a divine creature in rose-leaf silks, what was there left for him, as the dream obstinately refused to realise itself, but a blind flight into some Teniers kitchen, where boors are

making merry, without thought of yesterday or to-morrow? There, perhaps, in that ferment of animal life, he could forget life as he dreamed it, with too faint hold upon his dreams to make dreams come true.

For, there is not a dream which may not come true, if we have the energy which makes, or chooses, our own fate. We can always, in this world, get what we want, if we will it intensely and persistently enough. Whether we shall get it sooner or later is the concern of fate; but we shall get it. It may come when we have no longer any use for it, when we have gone on willing it out of habit, or so as not to confess that we have failed. But it will come. So few people succeed greatly because so few people can conceive a great end, and work towards that end without deviating and without tiring. But we all know that the man who works for money day and night gets rich; and the man who works day and night for no matter what kind of material power, gets the power. It is the same with the deeper, more spiritual, as it seems vaguer issues, which make for happiness and every intangible success. It is only the dreams of those

light sleepers who dream faintly that do not come true.

We get out of life, all of us, what we bring to it; that, and that only, is what it can teach us. There are men whom Dowson's experiences would have made great men, or great writers; for him they did very little. Love and regret, with here and there the suggestion of an uncomforting pleasure snatched by the way, are all that he has to sing of; and he could have sung of them at much less "expense of spirit," and, one fancies, without the "waste of shame" at all. Think what Villon got directly out of his own life, what Verlaine, what Musset, what Byron, got directly out of their own lives! It requires a strong man to "sin strongly" and profit by it. To Dowson the tragedy of his own life could only have resulted in an elegy. "I have flung roses, roses, riotously with the throng," he confesses, in his most beautiful poem; but it was as one who flings roses in a dream, as he passes with shut eyes through an unsubstantial throng. The depths into which he plunged were always waters of oblivion, and he returned forgetting them. He is always

a very ghostly lover, wandering in a land of perpetual twilight, as he holds a whispered *colloque sentimental* with the ghost of an old love:

> "Dans le vieux parc solitaire et glacê,
> Deux spectres ont évoqué le passé."

It was, indeed, almost a literal unconsciousness, as of one who leads two lives, severed from one another as completely as sleep is from waking. Thus we get in his work very little of the personal appeal of those to whom riotous living, misery, a cross destiny, have been of so real a value. And it is important to draw this distinction, if only for the benefit of those young men who are convinced that the first step towards genius is disorder. Dowson is precisely one of the people who are pointed out as confirming this theory. And yet Dowson was precisely one of those who owed least to circumstances; and, in succumbing to them, he did no more than succumb to the destructive forces which, shut up within him, pulled down the house of life upon his own head.

A soul "unspotted from the world," in a body which one sees visibly soiling under one's eyes; that improbability is what all

who knew him saw in Dowson, as his youthful physical grace gave way year by year, and the personal charm underlying it remained unchanged. There never was a simpler or more attaching charm, because there never was a sweeter or more honest nature. It was not because he ever said anything particularly clever or particularly interesting, it was not beacause he gave you ideas, or impressed you by any strength or originality, that you liked to be with him; but because of a certain engaging quality, which seemed unconscious of itself, which was never anxious to be or to do anything, which simply existed, as perfume exists in a flower. Drink was like a heavy curtain, blotting out everything of a sudden; when the curtain lifted, nothing had changed. Living always that double life, he had his true and his false aspect, and the true life was the expression of that fresh, delicate, and uncontaminated nature which some of us knew in him, and which remains for us, untouched by the other, in every line that he wrote.

III.

Dowson was the only poet I ever knew who ever cared more for his prose than his verse; but he was wrong, and it is not by his prose that he will live, exquisite as that prose was, at its best. He wrote two novels in collaboration with Mr. Arthur Moore: *A Comedy of Masks*, in 1893, and *Adrian Rome*, in 1899, both done under the influence of Mr. Henry James, both interesting because they were personal studies, and studies of known surroundings, rather than for their actual value as novels. A volume of "Stories and Studies in Sentiment," called *Dilemmas*, in which the influence of Mr. Wedmore was felt in addition to the influence of Mr. James, appeared in 1895. Several other short stories, among his best work in prose, have not yet been reprinted from the *Savoy*. Some translations from the French, done as hack work, need not be mentioned here, though they were never without some traces of his peculiar quality of charm in language. The short stories were indeed rather "studies in sentiment" than stories; studies of singular delicacy,

but with only a faint hold on life, so that perhaps the best of them was not unnaturally a study in the approaches of death: "The Dying of Francis Donne." For the most part they dealt with the same motives as the poems, hopeless and reverent love, the ethics of renunciation, the disappointment of those who are too weak or too unlucky to take what they desire. They have a sad and quiet beauty of their own, the beauty of second thoughts and subdued emotions, of choice and scholarly English, moving in the more fluid and reticent harmonies of prose almost as daintily as if it were moving to the measure of verse. Dowson's care over English prose was like that of a Frenchman writing his own language with the respect which Frenchmen pay to French. Even English things had to come to him through France, if he was to prize them very highly; and there is a passage in *Dilemmas* which I have always thought very characteristic of his own tastes, as it refers to an "infinitesimal library, a few French novels, an Horace, and some well-thumbed volumes of the modern Englisn poets in the familiar edition of Tauchnitz." He was Latin by all his

affinities, and that very quality of slightness, of parsimony almost in his dealings with life and the substance of art, connects him with the artists of Latin races, who have always been so fastidious in their rejection of mere nature, when it comes too nakedly or too clamorously into sight and hearing, and so gratefully content with a few choice things faultlessly done.

And Dowson in his verse (the *Verses* of 1896, *The Pierrot of the Minute, a dramatic phantasy in one act*, of 1897, the posthumous volume, *Decorations*) was the same scrupulous artist as in his prose, and more felicitously at home there. He was quite Latin in his feeling for youth, and death, and "the old age of roses," and the pathos of our little hour in which to live and love; Latin in his elegance, reticence, and simple grace in the treatment of these motives; Latin, finally, in his sense of their sufficiency for the whole of one's mental attitude. He used the commonplaces of poetry frankly, making them his own by his belief in them: the Horatian Cynara or Neobule was still the natural symbol for him when he wished to be most personal. I remember his saying to me that

his ideal of a line of verse was the line of Poe:

"The viol, the violet, and the vine;"

and the gracious, not remote or unreal beauty, which clings about such words and such images as these, was always to him the true poetical beauty. There never was a poet to whom verse came more naturally, for the song's sake; his theories were all æsthetic, almost technical ones, such as a theory, indicated by his preference for the line of Poe, that the letter "v" was the most beautiful of the letters, and could never be brought into verse too often. For any more abstract theories he had neither tolerance nor need. Poetry as a philosophy did not exist for him; it existed solely as the loveliest of the arts. He loved the elegance of Horace, all that was most complex in the simplicity of Poe, most bird-like in the human melodies of Verlaine. He had the pure lyric gift, unweighted or unballasted by any other quality of mind or emotion; and a song, for him, was music first, and then whatever you please afterwards, so long as it suggested, never told, some delicate sentiment, a sigh or a caress; finding words,

at times, as perfect as these words of a poem headed, "O Mors! quam amara est memoria tua homini pacem habenti in substantiis suis":

"Exceeding sorrow
Consumeth my sad heart!
Because to-morrow
We must depart,
Now is exceeding sorrow
All my part!

"Give over playing,
Cast thy viol away:
Merely laying
Thine head my way:
Prithee, give over playing,
Grave or gay.

"Be no word spoken;
Weep nothing: let a pale
Silence, unbroken
Silence prevail!
Prithee, be no word spoken,
Lest I fail!

"Forget to-morrow!
Weep nothing: only lay
In silent sorrow
Thine head my way:
Let us forget to-morrow,
This one day!"

There, surely, the music of silence speaks, if it has ever spoken. The words seem to tremble back into the silence which their whisper has interrupted, but not before they have created for us a mood, such a mood as the Venetian Pastoral attributed to Giorgione renders in painting. Languid, half inarticulate, coming from the heart of a drowsy sorrow very conscious of itself, and not less sorrowful because it sees its own face looking mournfully back out of the water, the song seems to have been made by some fastidious amateur of grief, and it has all the sighs and tremors of the mood, wrought into a faultless strain of music. Stepping out of a paradise in which pain becomes so lovely, he can see the beauty which is the other side of madness, and, in a sonnet *To One in Bedlam*, can create a more positive, a more poignant mood, with this fine subtlety:

"With delicate, mad hands, behind his sordid bars,
Surely he hath his posies, which they tear and twine;
Those scentless wisps of straw, that miserably line
His strait, caged universe, whereat the dull world stares,
Pedant and pitiful. O, how his rapt gaze wars
With their stupidity! Know they what dreams divine
Lift his long, laughing reveries like enchaunted wine,
And make his melancholy germane to the stars'?

"O lamentable brother! if those pity thee,
Am I not fain of all thine lone eyes promise me;
Half a fool's kingdom, far from men who sow and reap,
All their days, vanity? Better than mortal flowers,
Thy moon-kissed roses seem: better than love or sleep,
The star-crowned solitude of thine oblivious hours!"

Here, in the moment's intensity of this comradeship with madness, observe how beautiful the whole thing becomes; how instinctively the imagination of the poet turns what is sordid into a radiance, all stars and flowers and the divine part of forgetfulness! It is a symbol of the two sides of his own life: the side open to the street, and the side turned away from it, where he could "hush and bless himself with silence." No one ever worshipped beauty more devoutly, and just as we see him here transfiguring a dreadful thing with beauty, so we shall see, everywhere in his work, that he never admitted an emotion which he could not so transfigure. He knew his limits only too well; he knew that the deeper and graver things of life were for the most part outside the circle of his magic; he passed them by, leaving much of himself unexpressed, because he would permit himself to express

nothing imperfectly, or according to anything but his own conception of the dignity of poetry. In the lyric in which he has epitomised himself and his whole life, a lyric which is certainly one of the greatest lyrical poems of our time, "Non sum qualis eram bonæ sub regno Cynaræ," he has for once said everything, and he has said it to an intoxicating and perhaps immortal music:

"Last night, ah, yesternight, betwixt her lips and mine,
There fell thy shadow, Cynara! thy breath was shed
Upon my soul between the kisses and the wine;
And I was desolate and sick of an old passion,
Yea, I was desolate and bowed my head:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

"All night upon mine heart I felt her warm heart beat,
Night-long within mine arms in love and sleep she lay;
Surely the kisses of her bought red mouth were sweet;
But I was desolate and sick of an old passion,
When I awoke and found the dawn was grey:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

"I have forgot much, Cynara! gone with the wind,
Flung roses, roses riotously with the throng,
Dancing, to put thy pale, lost lilies out of mind;
But I was desolate and sick of an old passion,
Yea, all the time, because the dance was long:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

"I cried for madder music and for stronger wine,
But when the feast is finished and the lamps expire,
Then falls thy shadow, Cynara! the night is thine;
And I am desolate and sick of an old passion,
Yea, hungry for the lips of my desire:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion."

Here, perpetuated by some unique energy of a temperament rarely so much the master of itself, is the song of passion and the passions, at their eternal war in the soul which they quicken or deaden, and in the body which they break down between them. In the second book, the book of *Decorations*, there are a few pieces which repeat, only more faintly, this very personal note. Dowson could never have developed; he had already said, in his first book of verse, all that he had to say. Had he lived, had he gone on writing, he could only have echoed himself; and probably it would have been the less essential part of himself; his obligation to Swinburne, always evident, increasing as his own inspiration failed him. He was always without ambition, writing to please his own fastidious taste, with a kind of proud humility in his attitude towards the public, not expecting or requiring recognition.

He died obscure, having ceased to care even for the delightful labour of writing. He died young, worn out by what was never really life to him, leaving a little verse which has the pathos of things too young and too frail ever to grow old.

DREGS.

THE FIRE IS OUT, AND SPENT THE WARMTH THEREOF,
(THIS IS THE END OF EVERY SONG MAN SINGS!)
THE GOLDEN WINE IS DRUNK, THE DREGS REMAIN,
BITTER AS WORMWOOD AND AS SALT AS PAIN;
AND HEALTH AND HOPE HAVE GONE THE WAY OF LOVE
INTO THE DREAR OBLIVION OF LOST THINGS.
GHOSTS GO ALONE WITH US UNTIL THE END;
THIS WAS A MISTRESS, THIS, PERHAPS, A FRIEND.
WITH PALE, INDIFFERENT EYES, WE SIT AND WAIT
FOR THE DROPT CURTAIN AND THE CLOSING GATE:
THIS IS THE END OF ALL THE SONGS MAN SINGS.

ERNEST DOWSON.

The Bibelot

"Within the garden of Beaucaire
He met her by a secret stair,—
The night was centuries ago."

So do the two immortal lovers of Provence come before us out of their undimmed golden age of Romance. 'On such a night as this,' when moonlight made pallid the flowers at her feet, Aucassin beheld his love; we, also, in turn, behold them as types of that imperishable Youth which will endure while the world lasts.

In a similar subtle way, by a law of association, these old Italian gardens are revealed anew in what at first glance might seem a slight enough little discourse on their long vanished loveliness. But just this very evanescence of touch with its suggestion of midsummer magic makes it so real to us — this glamour of dead days and forgotten nights. [1]

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1 *There is a sense of secret affinity between this essay and the two poems prefixed by us, taken from that little book of lyrics which has never yet had due appreciation — A. Mary F. Robinson's* An Italian Garden: A Book of Songs. (*Portland, Maine, 1897.*)

One other woman, whose story-telling is even less known than her poetry, has a little prose pastel belonging of right to those of us who care very much for what she left. From Amy Levy's novel, Miss Meredith, *we behold with her heroine :*

"*A neglected bit of territory, enclosed between high walls, which did duty as a garden. In one corner of this latter stood a great ilex tree, its massy grey trunk old and gnarled, its blue-green foliage casting a wide shadow. Two or three cypresses, with their broom-like stems, sprang from the overgrown turf, which at this season of the year, was beginning to be yellow with daffodils, and a thick growth of laurel bushes ran along under the walls. An empty marble basin approached by broken pavement, marked the site of a forgotten fountain, the stonecrop running riot about its borders ; the house-leek thrusting itself every now and then through the interstices of shattered stone. Forlorn, uncared for as was this square of ground, it had for me a mysterious attraction ; it seemed to me that there clung to it* through all changes of times and weathers *something of the beauty in desolation which makes the charm of Italy.*"

"Through all changes of times and

weathers,"—*who save a poet would have put that into words? And precisely this—the forlorn little hint about "something of the beauty of desolation"—not only makes the charm of Italy, but infiltrates, diffuses its spell over Vernon Lee's all too brief* Old Italian Gardens.

FOR DECEMBER:

LYRICS FROM
THE HILLS OF DREAM
By
FIONA MACLEOD.

CASTELLO.

The Triton in the Ilex-wood
Is lonely at Castello.
The snow is on him like a hood,
The fountain-reeds are yellow.

But never Triton sorrowed yet
For weather chill or mellow:
He mourns, my Dear, that you forget
The gardens of Castello!

A. MARY F. ROBINSON.

VERSAILLES.

"Le monde est l'œuvre d'un grand Architecte qui est mort avant de l'avoir achevé."

B. CONSTANT.

The king is dead who planned these terraces;
The turf has grown to meadow grass again;
The lake is rank beneath the untended trees,
And down the mouldering statues drips the rain.

The king is dead. Ay, he, with all his kind,
Is absolutely vanished, lost, and gone,
And not a trace of him remains behind;
But the forsaken palace lingers on.

How desolate! The weary waters drowned
In mist, the empty alleys chill and frore,
The vast and melancholy pleasure-ground
Where the forgotten monarch comes no more.

How like an older Folly, planned no less
For beauty, where a greater monarch trod,
And now, grown old, in its extreme distress
Abandoned by the long-departed God!

A. MARY F. ROBINSON.

OLD ITALIAN GARDENS.

I.

THERE are also modern gardens in Italy, and in such I have spent many pleasant hours. But that has been part of my life of reality, which concerns only my friends and myself. The gardens I would speak about are those in which I have lived the life of the fancy, and into which I may lead the idle thoughts of my readers.

It is pleasant to have flowers growing in a garden. I make this remark because there have been very fine gardens without any flowers at all; in fact, when the art of gardening reached its height, it took to despising its original material, as, at one time, people came to sing so well that it was considered vulgar to have any voice. There is a magnificent garden near Pescia, in Tuscany, built in terraces against a hillside, with wonderful waterworks, which give you shower baths when you expect them least; and in this garden, surrounded by the trimmest box hedges, there bloom only imperishable blossoms of variegated pebbles and chalk. That I have seen with my own eyes. A similar garden, near Genoa, consisting of marble mosaics

and coloured bits of glass, with a peach tree on a wall, and an old harpsichord on the doorstep to serve instead of bell or knocker, I am told of by a friend, who pretends to have spent her youth in it. But I suspect her to be of supernatural origin, and this garden to exist only in the world of Ariosto's enchantresses, whence she originally hails. To return to my first remark, it is pleasant, therefore, to have flowers in a garden, though not necessary. We moderns have flowers, and no gardens. I must protest against such a state of things. Still worse is it to suppose that you can get a garden by running up a wall or planting a fence round a field, a wood or any portion of what is vaguely called Nature. Gardens have nothing to do with Nature, or not much. Save the garden of Eden, which was perhaps no more a garden than certain London streets so called, gardens are always primarily the work of man. I say primarily, for these outdoor habitations, where man weaves himself carpets of grass and gravel, cuts himself walls out of ilex or hornbeam, and fits on as roof so much of blue day or of starspecked, moonsilvered night, are never perfect until

Time has furnished it all with his weather stains and mosses, and Fancy, having given notice to the original occupants, has handed it into the charge of gentle little owls and furgloved bats, and of other tenants, human in shape, but as shy and solitary as they.

That is a thing of our days, or little short of them. I should be curious to know something of early Italian gardens, long ago; long before the magnificence of Roman Cæsars had reappeared, with their rapacity and pride, in the cardinals and princes of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. I imagine those beginnings to have been humble; the garden of the early middle ages to have been a thing more for utility than pleasure, and not at all for ostentation. For the garden of the castle is necessarily small; and the plot of ground between the inner and outer rows of walls, where corn and hay might be grown for the horses, is not likely to be given up exclusively to her ladyship's lilies and gillyflowers; salads and roots must grow there, and onions and leeks, for it is not always convenient to get vegetables from the villages below, particularly when there are enemies or disbanded pillaging mercena-

ries about; hence, also, there will be fewer roses than vines, pears, or apples, spaliered against the castle wall. On the other hand the burgher of the towns begins by being a very small artisan or shopkeeper, and even when he lends money to kings of England and Emperors, and is part owner of Constantinople, he keeps his house with business-like frugality. Whatever they lavished on churches, frescoes, libraries, and pageants, the citizens, even of the fifteenth century, whose wives and daughters still mended the linen and waited at table, are not likely to have seen in their villa more than a kind of rural place of business, whence to check factors and peasants, where to store wine and oil; and from whose garden, barely enclosed from the fields, to obtain the fruit and flowers for their table. I think that mediæval poetry and tales have led me to this notion. There is little mention in them of a garden as such: the Provençal lovers meet in orchards — "en un vergier sor folha d'albespi" — where the May bushes grow among the almond trees. Boccaccio and the Italians more usually employ the word *orto*, which has lost its Latin signification,

and is a place, as we learn from the context, planted with fruit trees and with pot-herbs, the sage which brought misfortune on poor Simona, and the sweet basil which Lisabetta watered, as it grew out of Lorenzo's head, "only with rosewater, or that of orange flowers, or with her own tears." A friend of mine has painted a picture of another of Boccaccio's ladies, Madonna Dianora, visiting the garden, which (to the confusion of her virtuous stratagem) the enamoured Ansaldo has made to bloom in January by magic arts; a little picture full of the quaint lovely details of Dello's wedding chests, the charm of the roses and lilies, the plashing fountains and birds singing against a background of wintry trees and snow-shrouded fields, the dainty youths and damsels treading their way among the flowers, looking like tulips and ranunculus themselves in their fur and brocade. But although in this story Boccaccio employs the word *giardino* instead of *orto*, I think we must imagine that magic flower garden rather as a corner — they still exist on every hillside — of orchard connected with the fields of wheat and olives below by the long tunnels of vine trellis, and

dying away into them with the great tufts of lavender and rosemary and fennel on the grassy bank under the cherry trees. This piece of terraced ground along which the water — spurted from the dolphin's mouth or the siren's breasts — runs through walled channels, refreshing impartially violets and salads, lilies and tall flowering onions, under the branches of the peach tree and the pomegranate, to where, in the shade of the great pink oleander tufts, it pours out below into the big tank, for the maids to rinse their linen in the evening, and the peasants to fill their cans to water the bedded out tomatoes, and the potted clove-pinks in the shadow of the house.

The Blessed Virgin's garden is like that, where, as she prays in the cool of the evening, the gracious Gabriel flutters on to one knee (hushing the sound of his wings lest he startle her) through the pale green sky, the deep blue-green valley; and you may still see in the Tuscan fields clumps of cypresses clipped wheel shape, which might mark the very spot.

The transition from this orchard-garden, this *orto*, of the old Italian novelists and

painters to the architectural garden of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, is indicated in some of the descriptions and illustrations of the Hypnerotomachia Poliphili, a sort of handbook of antiquities in the shape of a novel, written by Fra Francesco Colonna, and printed at Venice about 1480. Here we find trees and hedges treated as brick and stone work; walls, niches, colonnades, cut out of ilex and laurel; statues, vases, peacocks, clipped in box and yew; moreover antiquities, busts, inscriptions, broken altars and triumphal arches, temples to the graces and Venus, stuck about the place very much as we find them in the Roman Villas of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. But I doubt whether the Hypnerotomachia can be taken as evidence of the gardens of Colonna's own days. I think his descriptions are rather of what his archæological lore made him long for, and what came in time, when antiques were more plentiful than in the early Renaissance, and the monuments of the ancients could be incorporated freely into the gardens. For the classic Italian garden is essentially Roman in origin; it

could have arisen only on the top of ancient walls and baths, its shape suggested by the ruins below, its ornaments dug up in the planting of the trees; and until the time of Julius II. and Leo X., Rome was still a mediæval city, feudal and turbulent, in whose outskirts, for ever overrun by baronial squabbles, no sane man would have built himself a garden; and in whose ancient monuments castles were more to be expected than belvederes and orangeries. Indeed, by the side of quaint arches and temples, and labyrinths which look like designs for a box of toys, we find among the illustrations of Polifilo various charming woodcuts showing bits of vine trellis, of tank and of fountain, on the small scale, and in the domestic, quite unclassic style of the Italian burgher's garden. I do not mean to say that the gardens of Lorenzo dei Medici, of Catherine Cornaro near Asolo, of the Gonzagas near Mantua, of the Estensi at Scandiano and Sassuolo, were kitchen gardens like those of Isabella's basil pot. They had waterworks already, and aviaries full of costly birds, and enclosures where camels and giraffes were kept at vast expense, and parks with deer

and fishponds; they were the gardens of the castle, of the farm, magnified and made magnificent, spread over a large extent of ground. But they were not, any more than are the gardens of Boiardo's and Ariosto's enchantresses (copied by Spenser) the typical Italian gardens of later days.

And here, having spoken of that rare and learned Hypnerotomachia Poliphili (which, by the way, any one who wishes to be instructed, sickened, and bored for many days together, may now read in Monsieur Claudius Popelin's French translation), it is well I should state that for the rest of this dissertation I have availed myself of neither the *British Museum*, nor the *National Library of Paris*, nor the *Library of South Kensington* (the italics seem necessary to show my appreciation of those haunts of learning), but merely of the light of my own poor intellect. For I do not think I care to read about gardens among foolscap and inkstains and printed forms; in fact I doubt whether I care to read about them at all, save in Boccaccio and Ariosto, Spenser and Tasso; though I hope that my readers will be more literary characters than myself.

II.

The climate of Italy (moving on in my discourse) renders it difficult and almost impossible to have flowers growing in the ground all through the summer. After the magnificent efflorescence of May and June the soil cakes into the consistence of terra cotta, and the sun, which has expanded and withered the roses and lilies with such marvellous rapidity, toasts everything like so much corn or maize. Very few herbaceous flowers — the faithful, friendly, cheerful zinnias, for instance — can continue blooming, and the oleander, become more brilliantly rose-colour with every additional week's drought, triumph over empty beds. Flowers in Italy are a crop like corn, hemp, or beans; you must be satisfied with fallow soil when they are over. I say these things, learned by some bitter experience of flowerless summers, to explain why Italian flower-gardening mainly takes refuge in pots — from the great ornamented lemon-jars down to the pots of carnations, double geraniums, tube-roses, and jasmines on every wall, on

every ledge or window-sill; so much so, in fact, that even the famous sweet basil and with it young Lorenzo's head, had to be planted in a pot. Now this poverty of flower-beds and richness of pots made it easy and natural for the Italian garden to become, like the Moorish one, a place of mere greenery and water, a palace whose fountains plashed in sunny yards walled in with myrtle and bay, in mysterious chambers roofed over with ilex and box.

And this it became. Moderately at first; a few hedges of box and cypress — exhaling its resinous breath in the sunshine — leading up to the long, flat Tuscan house, with its tower or pillared loggia under the roof to take the air and dry linen; a few quaintly cut trees set here and there, along with the twisted mulberry tree where the family drank its wine and ate its fruit of an evening; a little grove of ilexes to the back, in whose shade you could sleep while the cicalas buzzed at noon; some cypresses gathered together into a screen, just to separate the garden from the olive yard above; gradually perhaps a balustrade set at the end of the bowling-green, that you might see, even

from a distance, the shimmery blue valley below, the pale-blue distant hills; and if you had it, some antique statue, not good enough for the courtyard of the town house, set on the balustrade or against the tree; also, where water was plentiful, a little grotto scooped out under that semicircular screen of cypresses. A very modest place, but differing essentially from the orchard and kitchen garden of the mediæval burgher; and out of which came something immense and unique — the classic Roman villa.

For your new garden, your real Italian garden, brings in a new element — that of perspective, architecture, decoration; the trees used as building material, the lie of the land as theatre arrangements, the water as the most docile and multiform stage property. Now think what would happen when such gardens begin to be made in Rome. The Popes and Popes' nephews can enclose vast tracts of land, expropriated by some fine sweeping fiscal injustice, or by the great expropriator, fever, in the outskirts of the town; and there place their casino, at first a mere summer-house, whither to roll of spring evenings in stately coaches

and breathe the air with a few friends: then gradually a huge house, with its suits of guests' chambers, stables, chapel, orangery, collection of statues and pictures, its subsidiary smaller houses, belvederes, circuses, and what not! And around the house His Eminence or His Serene Excellency may lay out his garden. Now go where you may in the outskirts of Rome you are sure to find ruins — great aqueduct arches, temples half-standing, gigantic terrace-works belonging to some baths or palace hidden beneath the earth and vegetation. Here you have naturally an element of architectural ground-plan and decoration which is easily followed: the terraces of quincunxes, the symmetrical groves, the long flights of steps, the triumphal arches, the big ponds, come, as it were, of themselves, obeying the order of what is below. And from underground, everywhere, issues a legion of statues, headless, armless, in all stages of mutilation, who are charitably mended, and take their place, mute sentinels, white and earth-stained, at every intersecting box hedge, under every ilex grove, beneath the cypresses of each sweeping

hillside avenue, wherever a tree can make a niche or a bough a canopy. Also vases, sarcophagi, baths, little altars, columns, reliefs by the score and hundred, to be stuck about everywhere, let into every wall, clapped on the top of every gable, every fountain, stacked up in every empty space.

Among these inhabitants of the gardens of Cæsar, Lucullus, or Sallust, who, after a thousand years' sleep, pierce through the earth into new gardens, of crimson cardinals and purple princes, each fattened on his predecessors' spoils — Medici, Farnesi, Peretti, Aldobrandini, Ludovisi, Rospigliosi, Borghese, Pamphili — among this humble people of stone I would say a word of garden Hermes and their vicissitudes. There they stand, squeezing from out their triangular sheath the stout pectorals veined with rust, scarred with corrosions, under the ilexes, whose drip, drip, through all the rainy days and nights of those ancient times and these modern ones has gradually eaten away an eye here, a cheek there, making up for the loss by gilding the hair with lichens, and matting the beard with green ooze; while patched chin, and restored nose, give

them an odd look of fierce German duellists. Have they been busts of Cæsars, hastily ordered on the accession of some Tiberius or Nero, hastily sent to alter into Caligula or Galba, or chucked into the Tiber on to the top of the monster Emperor's body after that had been properly hauled through the streets? Or are they philosophers, at your choice, Plato or Aristotle or Zeno or Epicurus, once presiding over the rolls of poetry and science in some noble's or some rhetor's library? Or is it possible that this featureless block, smiling foolishly with its orbless eye-sockets and worn-out mouth, may have had, once upon a time, a nose from Phidias's hand, a pair of Cupid lips carved by Praxiteles?

III.

A book of seventeenth-century prints — "The Gardens of Rome, with their plans raised and seen in perspective, drawn and engraved by Giov: Battista Falda, at the printing-house of Gio: Giacomo de' Rossi, at the sign of Paris, near the church of Peace in Rome" — brings home to one, with the names of the architects who laid them out, that these Roman villas are really a kind of architecture cut out of living instead of dead timber. To this new kind of architecture belongs a new kind of sculpture The antiques do well in their niches of box and laurel under their canopy of hanging ilex boughs; they are, in their weather-stained, mutilated condition, another sort of natural material fit for the artist's use; but the old sculpture being thus in a way assimilated through the operation of earth, wind, and rain, into tree-trunks and mossy boulders, a new sculpture arises undertaking to make of marble something which will continue the impression of the trees and waters, wave its jagged outlines

like the branches, twist its supple limbs like the fountains. It is high time that some one should stop the laughing and sniffing at this great sculpture of Bernini and his Italian and French followers, the last spontaneous outcome of the art of the Renaissance, of the decorative sculpture which worked in union with place and light and surroundings. Mistaken as indoor decoration, as free statuary in the sense of the antique, this sculpture has after all given us the only works which are thoroughly right in the open air, among the waving trees, the mad vegetation which sprouts under the moist, warm Roman sky, from every inch of masonry and travertine. They are comic of course looked at in all the details, those angels who smirk and gesticulate with the emblems of the passion, those popes and saints who stick out colossal toes and print on the sky gigantic hands, on the parapets of bridges and the gables of churches; but imagine them replaced by fine classic sculpture — stiff mannikins struggling with the overwhelming height, the crushing hugeness of all things Roman; little tin soldiers lost in the sky

instead of those gallant theatrical creatures swaggering among the clouds, pieces of wind-torn cloud, petrified for the occasion, themselves! Think of Bernini's Apollo and Daphne, a group unfortunately kept in a palace room, with whose right angles its every outline swears, but which, if placed in a garden, would be the very summing up of all garden and park impressions in the waving, circling lines; yet not without a niminy piminy restraint of the draperies, the limbs, the hair turning to clustered leaves, the body turning to smooth bark, of the flying nymph and the pursuing god.

The great creation of this Bernini school, which shows it as the sculpture born of gardens, is the fountain. No one till the seventeenth century had guessed what might be the relations of stone and water, each equally obedient to the artist's hand. The mediæval Italian fountain is a tank, a huge wash-tub fed from lions' mouths, as if by taps, and ornamented, more or less, with architectural and sculptured devices. In the Renaissance we get complicated works of art — Neptunes with tridents throne above sirens squeezing their breasts, and

cupids riding on dolphins, like the beautiful fountain of Bologna; or boys poised on one foot, holding up tortoises, like Rafael's Tartarughe of Piazza Mattei; more elaborate devices still, like the one of the villa at Bagnaia, near Viterbo. But these fountains do equally well when dry, equally well translated into bronze or silver: they are wonderful salt-cellars or fruit-dishes; everything is delightful except the water, which spurts in meagre threads as from a garden-hose. They are the fitting ornament of Florence, where there is pure drinking water only on Sundays and holidays, of Bologna, where there is never any at all.

The seventeenth century made a very different thing of its fountains — something as cool, as watery, as the jets which gurgle and splash in Moorish gardens and halls, and full of form and fancy withal, the water never alone, but accompanied by its watery suggestion of power and will and whim. They are so absolutely right, these Roman fountains of the Bernini school, that we are apt to take them as a matter of course, as if the horses had reared between the spurts from below and the gushes and trickles

above; as if the Triton had been draped with the overflowing of his horn; as if the Moor with his turban, the Asiatic with his veiled fall, the solemn Egyptian river god, had basked and started back with the lion and the seahorse among the small cataracts breaking into foam in the pond, the sheets of water dropping, prefiguring icicles, lazily over the rocks, all stained black by the north winds and yellow by the lichen, all always, always, in those Roman gardens and squares, from the beginning of time, natural objects, perfect and not more to be wondered at than the water-encircled rocks of the mountains and seashores. Such art as this cannot be done justice to with the pen; diagrams would be necessary, showing how in every case the lines of the sculpture harmonise subtly, or clash to be more subtly harmonised, with the movement, the immensely varied, absolutely spontaneous movement of the water; the sculptor, become infinitely modest, willing to sacrifice his own work, to make it uninteresting in itself, as a result of the hours and days he must have spent watching the magnificent manners and exquisite tricks of natural

waterfalls — nay, the mere bursting alongside of breakwaters, the jutting up between stones, of every trout-stream and milldam. It is not till we perceive its absence (in the fountains, for instance, of modern Paris) that we appreciate this Roman art of water sculpture. Meanwhile we accept the fountains as we accept the whole magnificent harmony of nature and art — nature tutored by art, art fostered by nature — of the Roman villas, undulating, with their fringe of pines and oaks, over the hillocks and dells of the Campagna, or stacked up proudly, vineyards and woods all round, on the steep sides of Alban and Sabine hills.

IV.

This book of engravings of the villas of the Serene Princes Aldobrandini, Pamphili, Borghese, and so forth, brings home to us another fact, to wit, that the original owners and layers out thereof must have had but little enjoyment of them. There they go in their big coaches, among the immense bows and curtsies of the ladies and gentlemen and dapper ecclesiastics whom they meet; princes in feathers and laces, and cardinals in silk and ermine. But the delightful gardens on which they are being complimented are meanwhile mere dreadful little plantations, like a nurseryman's squares of cabbages, you would think, rather than groves of ilexes and cypresses, for, alas, the greatest princes, the most magnificent cardinals, cannot bribe time, or hustle him to hurry up.

And thus the gardens were planted and grew. For whom? Certainly not for the men of those days, who would doubtless have been merely shocked could they have seen or foreseen. . . . For their ghosts

perhaps? Scarcely. A friend of mine, in whose information on such matters I have implicit belief, assures me that it is not the *whole* ghosts of the ladies and cavaliers of long ago who haunt the gardens; not the ghost of their everyday, humdrum likeness to ourselves, but the ghosts of certain moments of their existence, certain rustlings, and shimmerings of their personality, their waywardness, momentary transcendent graces and graciousnesses, unaccountable wistfulness and sorrow, certain looks of the face and certain tones of the voice (perhaps none of the steadiest), things that seem to die away into nothing on earth, but which have permeated their old haunts, clung to the statues with the ivy, risen and fallen with the plash of the fountains, and which now exhale in the breath of the honeysuckle and murmur in the voice of the birds, in the rustle of the leaves and the high, invading grasses. There are some verses of Verlaine's, which come to me always, on the melancholy minuet tune to which Monsieur Fauré has set them, as I walk in those Italian gardens, Roman and Florentine, walk in the spirit as well as in the flesh:—

Votre âme est un paysage choisi
Que vont charmant masques et bergamasques
Jouant du luth et quasi
Tristes sous leurs déguisements fantasques.
Tout en chantant sur le mode mineur
L'amour vainqueur et la vie opportune,
Ils n'ont pas l'air de croire à leur bonheur;
Et leur chanson se mêle au clair de lune,
Au calme clair de lune triste et beau
Qui fait rêver les oiseaux dans les arbres
Et sangloter d'extase les jets d'eau,
Les grands jets d'eau sveltes parmi les marbres.[1]

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[1] Your soul is as a moonlit landscape fair,
Peopled with maskers delicate and dim,
That play on lutes and dance and have an air
Of being sad in their fantastic trim.
The while they celebrate in minor strain
Triumphant love, effective enterprise,
They have an air of knowing all is vain,—
And through the quiet moonlight their songs rise,
The melancholy moonlight, sweet and lone,
That makes to dream the birds upon the tree,
And in their polished basins of white stone
The fountains tall to sob with ecstasy.

GERTRUDE HALL.

V.

And this leads me to wonder what these gardens must be when the key has turned in their rusty gates, and the doorkeeper gone to sleep under the gun hanging from its nail. What must such places be, Mondragone, for instance, near Frascati, and the deserted Villa Pucci near Signa, during the great May nights, when my own small scrap of garden, not beyond kitchen sounds and servants' lamps, is made wonderful and magical by the scents which rise up, by the song of the nightingales, the dances of the fireflies, copying in the darkness below the figures which are footed by the nimble stars overhead. Into such rites as these, which the poetry of the past practises with the poetry of summer nights, one durst not penetrate, save after leaving one's vulgar flesh, one's habits, one's realities outside the gate.

And since I have mentioned gates, I must not forget one other sort of old Italian garden, perhaps the most poetical and pathetic — the garden that has ceased to

exist. You meet it along every Italian highroad or country lane; a piece of field, tender green with the short wheat in winter, brown and orange with the dried maize husks and seeding sorghum in summer, the wide grass path still telling of coaches that once rolled in; a big stone bench, with sweeping shell-like back under the rosemary bushes; and, facing the road, between solemnly grouped cypresses or stately marshalled poplars, a gate of charming hammered iron standing open between its scroll-work masonry and empty vases, under its covered escutcheon. The gate that leads to nowhere.

The Bibelot

I

"I *HAVE no liking for personal publicity. My writings are for the unknown public, not myself. . . . My life is mainly spent in the Western Highlands and Isles, and save for a week or so now and again in Edinburgh, I am never in towns which depress me beyond words, and which I care for only for the music that I can hear there. For the rest, I was born more than a thousand years ago, in the remote region of Gaeldom known as the Hills of Dream. There I have lived the better part of my life; my father's name was Romance, and that of my mother was Dream.*" [1]

II

Must we confess it was not only for its own intrinsic beauty that we recently put forth A Little Garland of Celtic Verse, *but also that it might serve as a lovely harbinger of certain* Lyrics From the Hills

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1 *See* The New Mysticism, *an article contributed to the Fortnightly Review for June last by Mr. Ernest Rhys.*

of Dream? *Few, apparently, of Miss Macleod's books have passed into second editions,*[2] *a fact not to be unduly wondered at. "The Gaelic colour which she uses so profusely — too profusely, it may seem to the critical Saxon, at times" — may have delayed, — it surely cannot long delay — a wider recognition of her genius. And, after all, in the final audit, editions do not so much matter. The tide of Song rises and falls responsive to its own divine law: a lyric bides its time unscathed of the years, unheeding the neglect of man. Enough if*

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2 *The list, (omitting an almost equally long one of announced titles which appear to some extent to be incorporated in the later* accomplished *issues) is as follows: 1. Pharais. 16mo. Derby, 1894. 2. The Mountain Lovers. 8vo. London, 1895. 3. The Sin Eater and Other Tales. 8vo. Edinburgh, (n. d.) 1895. 4. The Washer of the Ford: and other Legendary Moralities. (n. d.) 8vo. Edinburgh, 1896. 5. Green Fire. A Romance. 8vo. Westminster, 1896. 6. The Shorter Stories (re-issued and rearranged with additional tales): 1 — Spiritual Tales; 2 — Barbaric Tales; 3 — Tragic Romances. 3 vols. 8vo. Paper wrappers. (n. d.) Edinburgh. 7. From the Hills of Dream: Mountain Songs and Island Runes. Cr. 8vo. (n. d.) Edinburgh, 1896. 8. The Dominion of Dreams. 8vo. Westminster, 1900. 9. The Laughter of Peterkin: Old Celtic Tales Retold. 1900. 10. The Divine Adventure; Iona; By Sundown Shores; Studies in Spiritual History. 8vo. London, 1900.*

at last that is raised in power which was sown in weakness. Every great poem has, it may be, a season when it remains unread or seemingly is lost to human sight: to be revealed anew, as an inspiration 'precious to the soul,' when the tumult of To-day, as of Yesterday, is stilled forever.

III

Thoughts like these arise, unbidden, perhaps unsought; upon coming to read the poetry of Fiona Macleod. Here is verse which "speaks to the heart because it came from the heart." And informing it all is the sound of the wind that has blown throughout the ages, a sound heard by Llywarch Hën in his forgotten day. The lonely of heart hear it in every generation. Verse of this sort is charged with the solemnity and speaks with the simplicity of all enduring Art.

Three of these poems interpret the deepest things of man's life and woman's love in a manner and by a method of appalling directness. Consider the concluding rune, —The Rune of the Passion of Women. *The words of this unrhymed poem—a magnificent vindication of* vers libre *in itself—are words of fire and tears. Herein the soul is stripped as bare as the erstwhile*

beautiful body was stripped bare to the anguished eyes of her whom Villon limned for all time — The Fair Helm-maker grown old.

"Through the heart, I go to lost gardens, to mossed fountains, to groves where is no white beauty of still statue, but only the beauty of an old forgotten day remembered with quickened pulse and desired with I know not what of longing and weariness."

Ah, to have attained to such vision of The Land of Heart's Desire is to have laid hold upon the everlasting life of Poetry.

FOR JANUARY:

IN HOSPITAL
By
WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY.

LYRICS
From
THE HILLS OF DREAM.

I hear the sea-song of the blood in my heart,
I hear the sea-song of the blood in my ears;
And I am far apart,
And lost in the years.

But when I lie and dream of that which was
Before the first man's shadow flitted on the grass—
I am stricken dumb
With sense of that to come.

Is then this wildering sea-song but a part
Of the old song of the mystery of the years—
Or only the echo of the tired Heart
And of Tears?

FIONA MACLEOD.

(From *The Divine Adventure*, 1900.)

"WE are coming closer to nature, as we seem to shrink from it with something of horror, disdaining to catalogue the trees of the forest. And as we brush aside the accidents of daily life, in which men and women imagine that they are alone touching reality, we come closer to humanity, to everything in humanity that may have begun before the world and may outlast it.

"Here, then, in this revolt against exteriority, against rhetoric, against a materialistic tradition; in this endeavour to disengage the ultimate essence, the soul, of whatever exists and can be realised by the consciousness; in this dutiful waiting upon every symbol by which the soul of things can be made visible; literature, bowed down by so many burdens, may at last attain liberty, and its authentic speech. In attaining this liberty, it accepts a heavier burden; for in speaking to us so intimately, so solemnly, as only religion had hitherto spoken to us, it becomes itself a kind of religion, with all the duties and responsibilities of the sacred ritual."

ARTHUR SYMONS.

(*The Symbolist Movement in Literature.* London, 1899.)

FROM THE HILLS OF DREAM.

ACROSS the silent stream
Where the slumber-shadows go,
From the dim blue Hills of Dream
I have heard the west wind blow.

Who hath seen that fragrant land,
Who hath seen that unscanned west?
Only the listless hand
And the unpulsing breast.

But when the west wind blows
I see moon-lances gleam
Where the Host of Faerie flows
Athwart the Hills of Dream.

And a strange song I have heard
By a shadowy stream,
And the singing of a snow-white bird
On the Hills of Dream.

THE WHITE PEACE.

It lies not on the sunlit hill
  Nor on the sunlit plain:
Nor ever on any running stream
  Nor on the unclouded main —

But sometimes, through the Soul of Man,
  Slow moving o'er his pain,
The moonlight of a perfect peace
  Floods heart and brain.

THE BURTHEN OF THE TIDE.

THE tide was dark an' heavy with the burden that it bore.
I heard it talkin', whisperin', upon the weedy shore:
Each wave that stirred the sea-weed was like a closing door,
'Tis closing doors they hear at last who hear no more, no more,
My Grief,
No more!

The tide was in the salt sea-weed, and like a knife it tore,
The wild sea-weed went moaning, sooing, moaning o'er and o'er,
The deep sea-heart was brooding deep upon its ancient lore,
I heard the sob, the sooing sob, the dying sob at its core,
My Grief,
Its core!

The white sea-waves were wan and grey its ashy lips before;
The yeast within its ravening mouth was red with streaming gore —
O red sea-weed, O red sea-waves, O hollow baffled roar,
Since one thou hast, O dark dim Sea, why callest thou for more,
My Grief,
For more!

AN OLD TALE OF THREE.

Ah, bonnie darling, lift your dark eyes dreaming!
See, the firelight fills the gloaming, though deep darkness grows without —

[Hush, dear, hush, I hear the sea-birds screaming,
And down beyond the haven the tide comes with a shout!]

Ah, birdeen, sweetheart, sure he is not coming,
He who has your hand in fee, while I have all your heart —

[Hush, dear, hush, I hear the wild bees humming
Far away in the underworld where true love shall not part!]

Darling, darling, darling, all the world is singing,
Singing, singing, singing a song of joy for me!

[Hush, dear, hush, what wild sea-wind is bringing
Gloom o' the sea about thy brow, athwart the eyes of thee?]

Ah, heart o' me, darling, darling, all my heart's aflame!
Sure, at the last we are all in all, all in all we two!

AT THE DOOR.

A Voice.

This is the way I take my own, this is the boon I claim!
(*Later, in the dark, the living brooding beside the dead:* —)
Sure, at the last, ye are all in all, all in all, ye two —
Ah, hell of my heart! Ye are dust to me — and dust with dust may woo!

IN THE SHADOW.

Oh, she will have the deep dark heart, for all her face is fair;
As deep and dark as though beneath the shadow of her hair:
For in her hair a spirit dwells that no white spirit is,
And hell is in the hopeless heaven of that lost spirit's kiss.

She has two men within the palm, the hollow of her hand:
She takes their souls and blows them forth as idle drifted sand:
And one falls back upon her breast that is his quiet home,
And one goes out into the night and is as wind-blown foam.

And when she sees the sleep of one, ofttimes she rises there
And looks into the outer dark and calleth soft and fair:
And then the lost soul that afar within the dark doth roam
Comes laughing, laughing, laughing, and crying, Home! Home!

And is there any home for him whose portion is the night?
And is there any peace for him whose doom is endless flight?
O wild sad bird, O wind-spent bird, O bird upon the wave
There is no home for thee, wild bird, but in the cold sea-grave!

MORAG OF THE GLEN.

WHEN Morag of the Glen was fëy
They took her where the Green Folk stray:
And there they left her, night and day,
A day and night they left her, fëy.

And when they brought her home again,
Aye of the Green Folk was she fain:
They brought her leannan, Roy M'Lean,
She looked at him with proud disdain.

For I have killed a man, she said,
A better man than you to wed:
I slew him when he clasped my head,
And now he sleepeth with the dead.

And did you see that little wren?
My sister dear it was flew, then!
That skull her home, that eye her den,
Her song is, Morag o' the Glen!

For when she went I did not go,
But washed my hands in blood-red woe:
O wren, trill out your sweet song's flow,
Morag is white as the driven snow!

THE HILLS OF RUEL.

"OVER the hills and far away"—
That is the tune I heard one day,
When heather-drowsy I lay and listened
And watched where the stealthy sea-tide glistened.

Beside me there on the Hills of Ruel
An old man stooped and gathered fuel—
And I asked him this: if his son were dead,
As the folk in Glendaruel all said,
How could he still believe that never
Duncan had crossed the shadowy river.

Forth from his breast the old man drew
A lute that once on a rowan-tree grew:
And, speaking no words, began to play
"Over the hills and far away."

"But how do you know," I said, thereafter,
"That Duncan has heard the fairy laughter?
How do you know he has followed the cruel
Honey-sweet folk of the Hills of Ruel?"
"How do I know?" the old man said,
"Sure I know well my boy's not dead:
For late on the morrow they hid him, there
Where the black earth moistens his yellow hair
I saw him alow on the moor close by,
I watched him low on the hillside lie,

An' I heard him laughin' wild up there,
An' talk, talk, talkin' beneath his hair —
For down o'er his face his long hair lay
But I saw it was cold and ashy grey.
Ay, laughin' and talkin' wild he was,
An' that to a Shadow out on the grass,
A Shadow that made my blood go chill,
For never its like have I seen on the hill.
An' the moon came up, and the stars grew white,
An' the hills grew black in the bloom o' the night,
An' I watched till the death-star sank in the moon
And the moonmaid fled with her moonwhite shoon,
Then the Shadow that was on the moorside there
Rose up and shook its shadowy hair,
And Duncan he laughed no more, but grey
As the rainy dust of a rainy day,
Went over the hills and far away."

"Over the hills and far away" —
That is the tune I heard one day.
O that I too might hear the cruel
Honey-sweet folk of the Hills of Ruel.

DREAM FANTASY.

"If Death Sleep's brother be,
And souls bereft of sense have so sweet dreams,
How could I wish thus still to dream and die!" ("Madrigal")
William Drummond of Hawthornden.

THERE is a land of Dream;
I have trodden its golden ways:
I have seen its amber light
From the heart of its sun-swept days;
I have seen its moonshine white
On its silent waters gleam —
Ah, the strange sweet lonely delight
Of the Valleys of Dream.

Ah, in that Land of Dream,
The mystical moon-white land,
Comes from what unknown sea —
Adream on what unknown strand —
A sound as of feet that flee,
As of multitudes that stream
From the shores of that shadowy sea
Through the Valleys of Dream.

It is dark in the Land of Dream.
There is silence in all the Land.
Are the dead all gathered there —
In havens, by no breath fanned?

This stir i' the dawn, this chill wan air —
This faint dim yellow of morning-gleam —
O is this sleep, or waking where
Lie hush'd the Valleys of Dream ?

OH, fair immaculate rose of the world,
rose of my dream, my Rose!
Beyond the ultimate gates of dream I have
heard thy mystical call:
It is where the rainbow of hope suspends
and the river of rapture flows—
And cool sweet dews from the wells of
peace forever fall.

And all my heart is aflame because of the
rapture and peace,
And I dream, in my waking dreams and
deep in the dreams of sleep,
Till the high sweet wonderful call that
shall be the call of release
Shall ring in my ears as I sink from gulf
to gulf and from deep to deep—

Sink deep, sink deep beyond the ultimate
dreams of all desire—
Beyond the uttermost limit of all that the
craving spirit knows:
Then, then, oh then I shall be as the inner
flame of thy fire,
O fair immaculate rose of the world, Rose
of my Dream, my Rose!

THE END OF AODH-OF-THE-SONGS.

THE swift years slip and slide adown the steep;
The slow years pass; neither will come again.
Yon huddled years have weary eyes that weep,
These laugh, these moan, these silent frown, these plain,
These have their lips acurl with proud disdain.

O years with tears, and tears through weary years,
How weary I who in your arms have lain:
Now, I am tired: the sound of slipping spears
Moves soft, and tears fall in a bloody rain,
And the chill footless years go over me who am slain.

I hear, as in a wood, dim with old light, the rain,
Slow falling; old, old, weary, human tears:
And in the deepening dark my comfort is my Pain,
Sole comfort left of all my hopes and fears,
Pain that alone survives, gaunt hound of the shadowy years.

THE RUNE OF AGE.

O THOU that on the hills and wastes of Night art Shepherd,
Whose folds are flameless moons and icy planets,
Whose darkling way is gloomed with ancient sorrows:
Whose breath lies white as snow upon the olden,
Whose sigh it is that furrows breasts grown milkless,
Whose weariness is in the loins of man
And is the barren stillness of the woman:
O thou whom all would 'scape, and all must meet,
Thou that the Shadow art of Youth Eternal,
The gloom that is the hush'd air of the Grave,
The sigh that is between last parted love,
The light for aye withdrawing from weary eyes,
The tide from stricken hearts forever ebbing!

O thou the Elder Brother whom none loveth,
Whom all men hail with reverence or mocking,
Who broodest on the brows of frozen summits
Yet dreamest in the eyes of babes and children:
Thou, Shadow of the Heart, the Brain, the Life,
Who art that dusk What-is that is already Has-Been,
To thee this rune of the fathers-to-the-sons
And of the sons to the sons, and mothers to new mothers —
To thee who art Aois,
To thee who art Age!

Breathe thy frosty breath upon my hair, for I am weary!
Lay thy frozen hand upon my bones that they support not,

Put thy chill upon the blood that it sustain not;
Place the crown of thy fulfilling on my forehead;
Throw the silence of thy spirit on my spirit;
Lay the balm and benediction of thy mercy
On the brain-throb and the heart-pulse and the life-spring—
For thy child that bows his head is weary,
For thy child that bows his head is weary.
I the shadow am that seeks the Darkness.
Age, that hath the face of Night unstarr'd and moonless,
Age, that doth extinguish star and planet,
Moon and sun and all the fiery worlds,
Give me now thy darkness and thy silence!

PRAYER OF WOMEN.

O SPIRIT that broods upon the hills
And moves upon the face of the deep,
And is heard in the wind,
Save us from the desire of men's eyes,
And the cruel lust of them.
Save us from the springing of the cruel seed
In that narrow house which is as the grave
For darkness and loneliness . . .
That women carry with them with shame, and weariness, and long pain,
Only for the laughter of man's heart,
And for the joy that triumphs therein,
And the sport that is in his heart,
Wherewith he mocketh us,
Wherewith he playeth with us,
Wherewith he trampleth upon us . . .
Us, who conceive and bear him;
Us, who bring him forth;
Who feed him in the womb, and at the breast, and at the knee:
Whom he calleth mother and wife,
And mother again of his children and his children's children.
Ah, hour of the hours,
When he looks at our hair and sees it is grey;
And at our eyes and sees they are dim;
And at our lips straightened out with long pain;
And at our breasts, fallen and seared as a barren hill;

And at our hands, worn with toil!
Ah, hour of the hours,
When, seeing, he seeth all the bitter ruin and wreck of us —
All save the violated womb that curses him —
All save the heart that forbeareth . . . for pity —
All save the living brain that condemneth him —
All save the spirit that shall not mate with him —
All save the soul he shall never see
Till he be one with it, and equal;
He who hath the bridle, but guideth not;
He who hath the whip, yet is driven;
He who as a shepherd calleth upon us,
But is himself a lost sheep, crying among the hills!
O Spirit, and the Nine Angels who watch us,
And Thy Son, and Mary Virgin,
Heal us of the wrong of man:
We whose breasts are weary with milk,
Cry, cry to Thee, O Compassionate!

THE RUNE OF THE SORROW OF WOMEN.

This is the rune of the women who bear in sorrow:
Who, having anguish of body, die in the pangs of bearing,
Who, with the ebb at the heart, pass ere the wane of the babe-month.

THE RUNE.

OWE are tired, we are tired, all we who are weary:
Heavy the breasts with milk that never shall nourish:
Heavy the womb that never again shall be weighty.
For we have the burthen upon us, we have the burthen,
The long slow pain, and the sorrow of going, and the parting,
O little hands, O little lips, farewell and farewell.
Bitter the sorrow of bearing only to end with the parting.

THE DREAM.

Far away in the east of the world a Woman had sorrow.
Heavy she was with child, and the pains were upon her.
Then God looked forth out of heaven, and he spake in his pity:
"O Mary, thou bearest the Prince of Peace, and thy seed shall be blessëd."
But Mary the Mother sighed, and God the All-Seeing wondered,
For this is the rune he heard in the heart of Mary the Virgin.
Man blindfold soweth the seed, and blindly he reapeth:
And lo the word of the Lord is a blessing upon the sower.

O what of the blessing upon the field that is sown,
What of the sown, not the sower, what of the mother, the bearer?
Sure it is this that I see: that everywhere over the world
The man has the pain and the sorrow, the weary womb and
the travail!
Everywhere patient he is, restraining the tears of his patience,
Slow in upbraiding, swift in passion unselfish,
Bearing his pain in silence, in silence the shame and the anguish:
Slow, slow he is to put the blame on the love of the woman:
Slow to say that she led him astray, swift ever to love and excuse her:
O 'tis a good thing, and glad I am at the seeing,
That man who has all the pain and the patient sorrow and waiting
Keepeth his heart ever young and never upbraideth the woman
For that she laughs in the sun and taketh the joy of her living
And holdeth him to her breast, and knoweth pleasure,
And plighteth troth akin to the starry immortals,
And soon forgetteth, and lusteth after another,
And plighteth again, and again, and yet again and again,
And asketh one thing only of man who is patient and loving, —
This: that he swerve not ever, that faithful he be and loyal,
And know that the sorrow of sorrows is only a law of his being,
And all is well with woman, and the world of woman, and God.
O 'tis a good thing, and glad I am at the seeing!
And this is the rune of man the bearer of pain and sorrow,
The father who giveth the babe his youth, his joy and the
life of his living!

(And high in His Heaven God the All-Seeing troubled.)

O we are tired, we are tired, all we who are weary:
Heavy the breasts with milk that never shall nourish:
Heavy the womb that never again shall be fruitful:
Heavy the hearts that never again shall be weighty.
For we have the burthen upon us, we have the burthen,
The long slow pain, and the sorrow of going, and the parting.
O little hands, O little lips, farewell and farewell:
Bitter the sorrow of bearing only to end with the parting,
Bitter the sorrow of bearing only to end with the parting.

THE RUNE OF THE PASSION OF WOMEN.

We who love are those who suffer,
We who suffer most are those who most do love.
O the heartbreak come of longing love,
O the heartbreak come of love deferred,
O the heartbreak come of love grown listless.
Far upon the lonely hills I have heard the crying,
The lamentable crying of the ewes,
And dreamed I heard the sorrow of poor mothers
Made lambless too and weary with that sorrow:
And far upon the waves I have heard the crying,
The lamentable crying of the seamews,
And dreamed I heard the wailing of the women
Whose hearts are flamed with love above the gravestone,
Whose hearts beat fast but hear no fellow-beating.
Bitter, alas, the sorrow of lonely women,
When no man by the ingle sits, and in the cradle
No little flower-like faces flush with slumber:
Bitter the loss of these, the lonely silence,
The void bed, the hearthside void,
The void heart, and only the grave not void:
But bitterer, oh more bitter still, the longing
Of women who have known no love at all, who never,
Never, never, have grown hot and cold with rapture
'Neath the lips or 'neath the clasp of longing,
Who have never opened eyes of heaven to man's devotion,
Who have never heard a husband whisper "wife,"

Who have lost their youth, their dreams, their fairness,
In a vain upgrowing to a light that comes not.
Bitter these: but bitterer than either,
O most bitter for the heart of woman
To have loved and been beloved with passion,
To have known the height and depth, the vision
Of triple-flaming love — and in the heart-self
Sung a song of deathless love, immortal,
Sunrise-haired, and starry-eyed, and wondrous:
To have felt the brain sustain the mighty
Weight and reach of thought unspanned and spanless,
To have felt the soul grow large and noble,
To have felt the spirit dauntless, eager, swift in hope
and daring,
To have felt the body grow in fairness,
All the glory and the beauty of the body
Thrill with joy of living, feel the bosom
Rise and fall with sudden tides of passion,
Feel the lift of soul to soul, and know the rapture
Of the rising triumph of the ultimate dream
Beyond the pale place of defeated dreams:
To know all this, to feel all this, to be a woman
Crowned with the double crown of lily and rose
And have the morning star to rule the golden hours
And have the evening star thro' hours of dream,
To live, to do, to act, to dream, to hope,
To be a perfect woman with the full
Sweet, wondrous, and consummate joy

Of womanhood fulfilled to all desire—
And then . . . oh then, to know the waning of the vision,
To go through days and nights of starless longing,
Through nights and days of gloom and bitter sorrow:
To see the fairness of the body passing,
To see the beauty wither, the sweet colour
Fade, the coming of the wintry lines
Upon pale faces chilled with idle loving,
The slow subsidence of the tides of living.
To feel all this, and know the desolate sorrow
Of the pale place of all defeated dreams,
And to cry out with aching lips, and vainly;
And to cry out with aching heart, and vainly;
And to cry out with aching brain, and vainly;
And to cry out with aching soul, and vainly;
To cry, cry, cry with passionate heartbreak, sobbing,
To the dim wondrous shape of Love Retreating—
To grope blindly for the warm hand, for the swift touch,
To seek blindly for the starry lamps of passion,
To crave blindly for the dear words of longing!
To go forth cold, and drear, and lonely, O so lonely,
With the heart-cry even as the crying,
The lamentable crying on the hills
When lambless ewes go desolately astray—
Yea, to go forth discrowned at last, who have worn
The flower-sweet lovely crown of rapturous love:
To know the eyes have lost their starry wonder;
To know the hair no more a fragrant dusk is

Wherein to whisper secrets of deep longing,
To know the breasts shall henceforth be no haven
For the dear weary head that loved to lie there —
To go, to know, and yet to live and suffer,
To be as use and wont demand, to fly no signal
That the soul founders in a sea of sorrow,
But to be "true," "a woman," "patient," "tender,"
"Divinely acquiescent," all-forbearing,
To laugh, and smile, to comfort, to sustain,
To do all this — oh this is bitterest,
O this the heaviest cross, O this the tree
Whereon the woman hath her crucifixion.

But O ye women, what avail? Behold,
Men worship at the tree, whereon is writ
The legend of the broken hearts of women.
And this is the end: for young and old the end:
For fair and sweet, for those not sweet nor fair,
For loved, unloved, and those who once were loved,
For all the women of all this weary world
Of joy too brief and sorrow far too long,
This is the end: the cross, the bitter tree,
And worship of the phantom raised on high
Out of your love, your passion, your despair,
Hopes unfulfilled, and unavailing tears.

COR CORDIUM.

SWEET Heart, true heart, strong heart,
star of my life, oh never
For thee the lowered banner, the lost endeavour!
The weapons are still unforged that thee and me halls dissever,
For I in thy heart have dwelling, and thou too in mine forever.

Can a silken cord strangle love, or a steel sword sever?
Or be as a bruisèd reed, the flow'r of joy for ever?
Love is a beautiful dream, a deathless endeavour,
And for thee the lowered banner, O Sweet Heart, never!

THE CLOSING DOORS.

EILIDH, Eilidh, Eilidh, heart of me, dear and sweet!
In dreams I am hearing the whisper, the sound of your coming feet:
The sound of your coming feet that like the sea-hoofs beat
A music by day and night, Eilidh, on the sands of my heart, my sweet!

O sands of my heart, what wind moans low along thy shadowy shore?
Is that the deep sea-heart I hear with the dying sob at its core?
Each dim lost wave that lapses is like a closing door:
'Tis closing doors they hear at last who soon shall hear no more,
Who soon shall hear no more.

Eilidh, Eilidh, Eilidh, come home, come home to the heart o' me:
It is pain I am having ever, Eilidh, a pain that will not be:
Come home, come home, for closing doors are as the waves o' the sea,

Once closed they are closed for ever, Eilidh,
lost, lost, for thee and me,
Lost, lost, for thee and me.

AT THE LAST.

She cometh no more:
Time, too, is dead.
The last tide is led
From the last shore.
Eternity . . . . .
What is Eternity
But the sea coming,
The sea going,
For evermore.

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